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VOLUME 146 NEW YORK • SATURDAY • JANUARY 15, 1938 NUMBER 3

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Editors
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Literary Editor MARGARET MARSHALL
Associate Editor MAXWELL S. STEWART

Dramatic Critic
JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

✶

Publisher
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Business Manager and Director of Circulation
HUGO VAN ARX

Advertising Manager
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The Shape of Things

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NOT SINCE THE HOOVER ADMINISTRATION has a federal budget been proposed so lacking in economic realism as that presented by President Roosevelt last week. Despite the business recession, the President assured Congress that no new money would be borrowed between now and June 30, 1939. Although a theoretical deficit of $950,000,000 will appear in the 1938-39 budget, there will be an actual surplus of more than $200,000,000 when account is taken of the collections under the federal Social Security Act and the railroad- and government-employees' retirement funds. This surplus is to be achieved in the face of declining revenues and increased armament appropriations by a reduction of nearly $600,000,000 in governmental expenditures. Included in this heavy slash are cuts of $500,000,000 in the appropriation for the WPA and other relief agencies, of $40,000,000 in the outlay for reclamation, rivers and harbors, and flood control, and of $21,000,000 in the amount set aside for new public buildings. In other words, the recession is to be met in precisely the same manner that the Great Engineer met the depression —by a stringent curtailment of government spending. The budget will be balanced, for all practical purposes, by means of the taxes imposed by the Social Security Act on the wage-earners, and there is no indication that an effort will be made to levy increased taxes on those best able to pay. In the face of fundamental facts such as these, the President's attack on the malefactors of great wealth would appear to have little more than political significance.

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MOST DISTURBING OF ALL IS THE BILLION which the President has requested for national defense, and the implication that this is just the beginning of a rearmament program comparable to those recently imposed upon the peoples of Europe. Mr. Roosevelt is supposed to favor a plan calling for the construction of 237,000 tons of naval vessels in excess of our commitments under the London and Washington treaties. An attempt is being made to defend this subsidy to the armament makers on the ground that it "gives employment to American workers" and also that a strengthening of our armed forces is necessary to resist fascism. Both arguments are rank hypocrisy. Naval construction gives

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much less employment per dollar than road building or housing and represents sheer economic waste. Our defense establishment, as Mr. Villard recently pointed out, is already far greater than is necessary for any legitimate purpose. It is true that the demand for rearmament has been backed by some advocates of collective security on the ground that it would be helpful in enforcing peace against would-be aggressors. Actually, however, an armament program of these proportions would be needed only if the United States were planning to tackle the job of law enforcement single-handed and by force of arms. As has repeatedly been stated in these columns, economic pressure by a group of determined powers would be sufficient to bring any aggressor to terms. Some degree of responsibility for the rearmament program must be attributed indirectly to the opposition of the isolationist group to any form of international cooperation. For if the United States is to play a lone hand in world affairs, the demand for a navy and an air force second to none is bound to win large popular support, however much it may be opposed by pacifists in the isolationist camp.

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ANY HOPE THAT THE PANAY INCIDENT would strengthen the moderate elements in the Japanese government has been dissipated by the events of the past week. Reports from Hangchow indicate that Japanese troops looted the city with as little restraint as at Nanking and Paotingfu. At Shanghai imperious local Japanese units came into conflict with both British and French police when they sought to extend military rule into the concessions. The sharp struggle over fundamental policy which has been going on for some time in Tokyo appears to have ended in complete victory for the extremist groups. Rumors are current that Prime Minister Kenoye, a moderate reactionary, may soon resign in favor of Home Minister Suetsugu, a leader of the fascist clique. Former War Minister Araki, usually regarded as the most extreme of the ultra-nationalists, has been named to the Cabinet advisory council and is expected to be admitted to the Cabinet in the near future. The effect of the extremists' triumph can only be guessed. It is significant, however, that Suetsugu openly advocated war with Britain only a few weeks before he was appointed to the Home Office. Araki is known to favor war with the Soviet Union. No one can say which group will triumph, but it is clear that Japanese militarism has headed into an adventure from which there can be no retreat.

*

JUSTICE SUTHERLAND'S RETIREMENT MARKS the passing of the old Supreme Court as we have known and not loved it. Justice Van Devanter was the real brains and strategy of the diehard group of four that dominated court policy for years and held at bay the whole movement for government control of business. But he wrote almost none of the group's decisions; that was left chiefly to Justice Sutherland, a faithful wheelhorse who was thrust forward to write the opinions because his manner was mild and ingratiating and he could always supply the right words and citations—and plenty of them. The court conservatives have thus through the last two resignations lost their leader and their front man. Justices McReynolds and Butler are doomed, at least for several years, to be rather lonely company for each other. President Roosevelt has for the first time a chance to clinch a liberal majority on the court. But the question is: what kind of liberal will he appoint? Even Justice Sutherland was, on occasion, at least a civil-liberties liberal. And so also, on most occasions, are the Chief Justice and Justice Roberts. Mr. Roosevelt may be tempted to play a generous role toward business by selecting a mildish liberal whose economic philosophy is nebulous. But he will do well to consider that the coming three years will be crucial if Congress should decide on a program that approaches genuine economic planning. Only a man with a grasp of economic reality will have the clarity and strength to follow the great Holmes tradition of giving to legislative enactments the benefit of every reasonable legal doubt.

*

THOSE WHO SUPPORTED SENATOR BLACK'S appointment to the Supreme Court on the ground that he would bring to it a new economic realism have reason to take satisfaction in his dissenting opinion last week in the Indianapolis Water Company case. The press has given a good deal of attention to the reformed court attitude in the matter of the PWA loans to municipalities for power plants; and, notably in Arthur Krock's column, has assessed the importance of the Pacific Gas and Electric decision, which represents a wedge for reintroducing historical or prudent-investment cost as a principle of valuation in place of reproduction cost. But the press appears to have quite generally overlooked the importance of the Black dissent in the Indianapolis case. The opinion is written with clarity, vigor, and a grasp of the relevant legal and economic material. It cuts cleanly through the maze of judicial opinions about principles for arriving at fair valuations of utilities, through the fantastic delays of due-process procedure, and through the overgrowths of legal learning which screen the fact that in the last analysis it is the consumer who bears the burden of excessive prices. In this dissent Justice Black stands not only against the Old Guard on the court but even against his liberal colleagues. The opinion indicates that the battle of valuation is by no means over, and that in time Black may perform the function that Brandeis performed twenty years ago—of gathering about himself a liberal minority whose basis of decision is economic realism and not the lesser of two oppressive legal doctrines.

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IF WE WERE A TALL, GAUNT MAN LIVING IN rooms in Baker Street with a certain Dr. Watson, nothing would give us greater pleasure than the Case of the Missing Robinsons, or the Adventure of the Phony Passports. But since our name is not Holmes, we make no

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sense of an affair involving both Tammany Hall and the Kremlin, and we think the best thing we can do is to sit tight and make no further comment, even if Herbert Hoover is dragged into the case, followed by the Dionne girls, Lin Yutang, and Ted Healy's stooges. Until all the characters are rounded up in the last chapter and all the loose threads pulled together in a knot, our only opinion in the matter is that the Soviet Union has the worst publicity department in the world. Why is so much Soviet news dished up as mystery garnished with melodrama? If the Russians have tracked down a couple of spies, let them say so. Let them at least announce whether or not their suspects are in prison, whether they are Americans, perhaps even what their names are, and when they will be tried. As it is, there is some doubt that Mrs. R. is even in Russia; one report has it that she has already been expelled from the country under promise of silence. Surely the Soviet government would be revealing no state secret if it answered these simple questions of fact—and it would leave a better taste in the mouth of a world still wondering what has become of Bukharin, Rykov, Romm, and others who have vanished from sight. If the heads of the Russian state had an ounce of good publicity sense they would clear up this mystery before you could say Jack Robinson-Rubens-Lepke-Marinelli-and-Trotsky.

*

MAYOR HAGUE OF JERSEY CITY GATHERED his loyal supporters about him on the evening of January 6 by the simple device of ordering his political machine to order jobholders to come out and put on a "monster rally"—or else. Its numbers were set at 75,000 by the faithful and at 15,500 by disrespectful newspaper men; and with one voice—the voice of Hague accompanied by several echoes—it denounced the "un-American invasion of Jersey City." The two principal echoes were Governor-elect A. Harry Moore and Judge Robert Carey, once Hague's bitterest Republican enemy. With remarkable illiteracy and a brutish eloquence, Hague roared out his usual defiance, denouncing the C. I. O., the "civil liberties," and various and sundry individuals, including "Mr. Ernest," as communistic, atheistic disturbers of his peace. Professing the tenderest sentiments for labor, he dared it to prefer the C. I. O. to the A. F. of L., with which he has worked so harmoniously in the past; in the name of Americanism and liberty he made it clear that neither would be tolerated in his jungle; invoking the Constitution, he made it equally clear that any attempt to exercise the rights guaranteed by it would be met with assorted blows over the head. Two days later the C. I. O. answered Mayor Hague by filing in the federal court an injunction which would open up Jersey City to other Americans and incidentally allow the natives to practice the right of free speech and assembly. Meanwhile we have to keep reminding ourselves that Hague is a national committeeman of the enlightened Democratic Party, which controls the federal Administration. Isn't it time Washington crossed the Delaware again?

AMERICANS WILL HAVE TO FACE SOONER or later the problem of what to do with the growing openness and arrogance of Nazi activities in this country. We print elsewhere in this issue an article by Lucille B. Milner on the working of the British Public Order Act, passed to deal with fascist incitements. The record is a disheartening one. Yet we do not believe that the proper conclusion to draw from it is that every attempt to control this menace does more harm than good, and that inaction is better than action. The moral is rather that such legislation should be drawn with care and scrutinized with anxiety, lest it be used to hamper legitimate activities of all groups. We hope in a later issue to deal in some detail with the problems that such legislation would have to solve in this country. Here we want only to say that the Nazi camps scattered throughout the country, with their military organization, their uniformed men, their drilling, and their preparation for what can only be violence, represent a potential state within a state that no nation could ignore. We believe that any legislation to control such developments should be limited strictly to their military aspects. We believe also that its enforcement cannot be left, as it was so largely left in England, to the discretion of the local police authorities, but should be at least partly a federal concern. If the depression deepens, as seems almost inevitable, fascist doctrines will find fertile ground among the unemployed, the insecure, the demoralized. It is better to deal with the problem now than to wait until it has become an unmanageable growth.

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DURING THE WINTER A BIG ITEM IN THE consumer's budget is the price of coal. That gives an importance to the work of the National Bituminous Coal Commission which has not been reflected in newspaper accounts. The work of the commission is an experiment in price control by a seven-man board made up of representatives of the producers, labor, and the "public." Usually the result of such a set-up is, as in the case of the NRA codes, that labor and the producers get what they want and the public (the consumer) pays and pays. The present commission has had rough sledding, with charges of graft and patronage made openly in Congress, and a four-to-three division developing within itself between supporters of the operators and supporters of labor. These inner difficulties have delayed the work of the commission, but recently it announced a price schedule which is far better than had been hoped for. This schedule should bring in $40,000,000 in increased revenue, to make up the losses under which the industry has been operating. The burden of increase falls on the heavy industries and railroads rather than on the domestic consumers, who actually get a slight reduction in price. Naturally the big industries have been lobbying vigorously against the schedule during the past two weeks. These facts may lead consumers to assume too readily that they are being helped by the commission. Although the commission is undoubtedly a stabilizing force in the industry, the increased prices for railroads

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and heavy industry will of course be passed on in the form of higher freight rates and increased commodity costs. The consumer cannot hope to benefit from this sort of sleight-of-hand.

Victory at Teruel

TERUEL is a great victory, not only because the Loyalists have occupied terrain, shortened their line, repulsed a monster counter-attack, lessened the threat of a Franco thrust to the sea, and completely ruined the rebels' chance of an offensive in the near future, but also because it should teach those who believe "events in Spain are moving to an insurgent victory" that they are wholly wrong.

Between 1914 and 1918 Germany won most of the battles, but lost the war. The Allies got started late but their resources and strength grew, while the fortunes of the Central Powers followed a descending curve. So, too, in Spain. Teruel must be judged against a background of past Loyalist performances. Between July 18, 1936, and November, 1936, the green government forces, except in the Guadarrama Mountains, were incapable of defense. Then began the historic resistance at Madrid. The republican army, nevertheless, was still weak and badly led, and in February Malaga fell. March brought an Italian offensive at Guadalajara. The government counter-attacked and routed Mussolini's legions. But the Loyalists did not themselves stage an offensive until July, 1937, a year after the war started. That was at Brunete. At the time the government leaders said that they proposed to initiate several limited offensives to teach their new army the art of attack. At Brunete some mistakes were made. Inexperience showed. The Loyalists won territory and in the inevitable counter-attack had to relinquish 30 per cent of it. The army fought better in the September offensive at Belchite.

The lessons learned at Brunete and Belchite helped the Loyalists to win their first big victory at Teruel. Instead of taking government territory with few losses as in the past, Franco has lost thousands of men and much equipment in a vain effort to recover his own ground. Teruel thus marks a turning of the tide. Although still inferior in artillery and aircraft, the republic can attack and win and hold its gains. The government army has progressed from a retreating militia to a *no pasaran* defense force and now to a powerful forward-thrusting machine. Franco's military establishment has deteriorated.

Barcelona looks ahead hopefully to the near future when the output of its recently regenerated industries will offset the rebels' advantage in foreign supplies. It is reasonable to expect, too, that the defeat at Teruel will still further depress the morale in Franco's territory. Loyalist spirit has been high despite the unbroken chain of defeats in the first year of the war, while Franco has had serious difficulty behind the lines despite considerable military success. This trouble should now be aggravated. If the resulting situation at last convinces Hitler and Mussolini that Franco is an empty barrel and that all their assistance is wasted, they will find themselves in a quandary. They will give the rebels more help because there is no alternative. But fascism cannot win in Spain. The struggle, however, will be long and bitter, and the Loyalists need strong support from foreign enemies of aggression.

While Teruel weakens Franco's hold on the civilian population, it serves to consolidate the Negrin Cabinet. The Caballero opposition is no more. In May, 1937, when Caballero ceased to be Prime Minister because he refused to relinquish the war portfolio although his inefficiency had provoked a demand for his retirement, he tried to take the large Socialist U. G. T. trade unions into the opposition with him. The majority resisted and voted to support Negrin. Before long Caballero's hold on the membership of the U. G. T., which he had led for so many years, became extremely tenuous. And now, having to reckon with the mounting prestige of the Negrin ministry and the workers' natural urge to support it, he has finally stepped down from the leadership of the U. G. T. This move reinforces the cohesion of the Popular Front, and reduces internal political friction. Loyalist Spain is today more united than ever. It is eager and increasingly able to cope with the fascist enemy.

Wanted: Three-Year Plan

IN HIS Jackson Day address, which within its limits was a fine fighting speech primarily addressed to the problem of party unity, the President referred again to the financial power concentrated in the hands of a few, to the holding-company tail that wags the dog of industry, and to the evils of price-rigging, unfair competition, and monopolistic practices. "Give to me and give to your government," he added, "the credit for a definite intention to eradicate them."

We do not doubt the President's intention, or that of a minority of progressives in his Administration. What we have questioned is the nature and even the existence of their program of eradication. The picture drawn in our Washington dispatch elsewhere in this issue is of men of good-will, expert at political tactics and showmanship, who have failed to come to grips with their essential economic problems. Mr. Cummings's report on anti-trust enforcement, written by Mr. Jackson, instead of presenting a program, passes the buck to Congress. Senator Wheeler's program for breaking up the railroad holding companies is still being kept a secret. Perhaps the outlines of a general program will merge in the President's special messages. At its best, it will probably call for a strengthening of the trade associations of small producers, a revision of the patent laws so that big industry will not be able to build empires on exclusive patents, and a strengthening of the intercorporate dividend tax. It may not go as far as that. And even if, as seems unlikely, we should succeed in stopping the further growth

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of the leviathan of big business, we should still have the existing business structures to deal with.

That is why we feel that the remedy either for the present depression or for our long-run economic ills does not lie in breaking up holding companies or prohibiting unfair practices. Those purposes are in themselves desirable and we favor them strongly. But it is well not to mistake the vanguard of the enemy for his main columns. And the best starting-point we have seen for grappling directly with the basic problem of poverty and unemployment amid potential plenty is to be found in the President's message. He used to talk merely of bringing back prosperity. He has substituted for that glittering generality a new concretion. He now talks of our national income of sixty-eight billion dollars for the past year, and of a potential national income of ninety to a hundred billion a year. That marks an important step forward—if he will follow it up.

It marks a step forward because so far what planning we have done has been a piecemeal restrictive planning, in single industries, in which the program has at best been to adjust the industry's price and production to what the rest of the country could absorb. This has been true of the NRA, the AAA, the bituminous-coal industry, the oil industry, the present Ellenbogen plan for the textile industry. The result is the familiar one—a measure of stabilization accomplished at the expense either of workers or consumers or both, or at the risk of cartelization. It would be far better to start with an estimate of national income (Mr. Roosevelt's figures are taken from the National Resources Committee) and an estimate of potential consumption for the products of each basic industry based on that national income. Each industry—automobiles, steel, oil, cement, copper, electrical products, chemical products, textiles, coal—could then produce for an expanded market; and in the very process of doing so it would create the employment and purchasing capacity that would constitute such an expanded market.

This is clearly planning instead of empirical blundering. And planning is exactly what we must have, whether under that name or some other. The present Administration will be in power for three years. If it had the courage and vision, it could start a three-year plan reaching toward the President's goal of a national income approximating his figures. The first year's goal might be seventy-five or eighty billion, the second year's ninety billion, the third the full hundred billion. Given the economies of large-scale manufacture in the mass-production industries, the expanded volume of automobiles, steel rails, electric refrigerators, and other products that this would mean could be produced at relatively low prices; and the savings could be pumped back, not to swell existing profits, but mainly into wages and lower costs—that is, into greater purchasing capacity.

Many intricate problems would be involved. We have just begun to get some real knowledge in our government departments of how the industrial processes work. Strangely enough, in the Department of Commerce, where you would most expect it, there is none; more material is in the Federal Reserve Board and the National Resources Committee. There would be other problems: the margin of error in estimates of production or consumption, the allocation of production between the capital-goods and consumer-goods industries, the need for maintaining a broad area of private initiative within the government controls. There would be finally the problem of bringing the intrenched forces of big industry to an understanding that their own interests lay with those of the community. These are always the problems of a rational production policy. We have the resources. We have the established democratic processes that alone would make economic planning safe. Have we also the necessary will to master the problem and force the minority that Mr. Roosevelt has been talking about to accept the solution?

The Ludlow Amendment

ALTHOUGH the Ludlow amendment has been buried by a close vote, we may assume that its bones will rise again—perhaps even during the present session. It obviously represents a large body of pacifist opinion, and ultimately it will be forced out of committee despite the opposition of the President and the State Department. Many of the objections to the measure are discussed by Mr. Villard elsewhere in this issue. While we are naturally in sympathy with what we take to be the objectives of this amendment—the lessening of the possibility of war and the spread of popular responsibility for vital decisions—we feel that Mr. Villard's catechism has omitted some of the practical dangers in the proposal.

When critics of the plebiscite declare that it undermines representative government, they are not denying that it is perhaps even more democratic than the present system. Nor do they imply that national referendums could not be developed alongside our present representative system. They are merely pointing out that the proposal stems from a wholly different philosophy of government, one that is as yet untried and untested on a national scale. The assumption that the people as a whole are better equipped than their elected representatives, either in information or native intelligence, to deal with the most vital questions affecting national policy is, to say the least, questionable.

Behind the theoretical case for representative government may be found certain practical considerations that we dare not overlook in considering the Ludlow amendment. Mr. Villard makes much of the point that the proposal, if adopted, would deprive the President of his war-making powers. Actually, the reverse would almost certainly be true. In an international crisis threatening to involve the United States in war, decisions would probably have to be made very quickly. Lacking time to set up the machinery for a national referendum—which we believe would take far longer than Mr. Villard suggests—the President would be forced to act independently. Thus in the end the people—like the German

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population—might be asked merely to ratify accomplished facts. Once hostilities had actually broken out, formal ratification would be inevitable, given the agencies of propaganda which are available to the government.

In placing checks on the declaration of war rather than on the pursuit of policies likely to lead to war, the Ludlow amendment would serve to strengthen one of the most sinister developments of recent years—the tendency to wage war without a formal declaration. In this respect it reveals a lineage similar to that of two other American peace proposals, the Kellogg Anti-War Pact and the Neutrality Act.

The most serious count against the Ludlow resolution, however, is that of poor timing. Not since 1918 has the threat of a war provoked by deliberate aggression been as great as at the present time. Since cooperation among the democracies is the one bulwark against such a conflict, nothing could be more encouraging to existing and would-be aggressors than the belief that the policy of the United States is dominated by the elements that pushed through the Neutrality Act and oppose the idea of collective action. Whether justifiably or not, adoption of the Ludlow amendment at this moment would surely have been interpreted abroad as a triumph for the isolationist elements. No one can say how far a Hitler, a Mussolini, or an Araki would be willing to gamble if America's aloofness were apparently confirmed to this extent.

Remember Chicago!

CHICAGO has long had the reputation of being a city where you can get away with murder; that reputation was sustained by the sequence of events after the Memorial Day demonstration in which ten persons were fatally shot and many others seriously wounded; and it was confirmed, with insolence, when sixty-three of the marchers, including some of the injured, were recently convicted of unlawful assembly—the original charge was criminal conspiracy—and fined $10 each. The dead were not prosecuted.

The sensational films of the Memorial Day incident and thousands of words of first-hand testimony given before the La Follette committee prove to any person with normal senses that the crowd which straggled across the field that day was a peaceful crowd, peacefully assembled, in which women and children and old men mingled. It is known that although the police pleaded self-defense to explain the shooting and claimed that the marchers had guns, not one of the officers was touched by a bullet; and there is extremely convincing testimony to indicate that after their victory the police, in an effort to prove that they had been attacked, systematically collected from the field and from dumps at its edges tomato stakes, rocks, and other refuse that had been there before the rout took place.

Finally there are photographs that show policemen clubbing helpless men already down, and there are gruesome tales, thoroughly substantiated, of wounded and beaten men denied first aid and then dumped one upon the other in patrol wagons where some of them bled to death. Yet in the face of this evidence a state court in Indiana and an official coroner's jury in Chicago have upheld the police in the crimes they committed on Memorial Day in collusion with the Republic Steel Corporation, which provided both tear gas and extra police power for the occasion. Presumably the police may repeat the performance with impunity; the labor-police history of Chicago practically guarantees new murders, new investigations, new acquittals of the murderers.

Is there no recourse? In this case the only possible legal redress seems to lie in an appeal from the convictions mentioned above or in suits for damages, of which some are pending. The Department of Justice made no move, at the time of the steel strike, to bring Girdler to terms, and apparently has no intention of doing so now. The La Follette committee has done its part, but its sensational findings have not, so far as we know, found their way into any court record. There remains otherwise only the recourse of continued agitation inside and outside Chicago. In the city itself the issue is not dead; on the contrary, there is a chance that it will become an important factor in the next mayoralty campaign. With the help of liberal opinion throughout the country it is conceivable that the issue can be forced; and the South Chicago massacre will not have been entirely in vain if the corrupt machine which rules the city can be turned out as a result of the events of last Memorial Day.

Meanwhile there remains the larger question of how the federal government intends to make effective the excellent work now being done by such agencies as the La Follette committee and the National Labor Relations Board. In Detroit a local judge acquitted the Ford service men who beat up U. A. W. organizers on May 26, though he had before him the same evidence on which the NLRB based its scathing verdict of guilty. In the Rand case still another judge, a federal judge this time, directed acquittal in the face of overwhelming evidence against a company which has boasted of its anti-union policy and which, like the Ford Company, was the subject of a thoroughly damning NLRB report. The Chicago case was somewhat different, involving as it did city officials and not a private employer. But in all these cases the spirit if not the letter of important federal laws has been violated; in each case a duly constituted federal investigating agency has proved violation beyond any reasonable doubt; in each case the culprits have been acquitted and the evidence gleaned by the investigating body ignored like so much water running down a waste pipe.

One remedy would be to strengthen the federal laws involved. Even more important is a will on the part of the Department of Justice to prosecute a billion dollars with the same fervor with which it goes after the malefactors of little or no wealth. For all the name-calling of the past few weeks, that will is not yet in evidence.

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Mr. Roosevelt, Ringmaster

BY MAX LERNER

Washington, January 9

DURING the past two weeks the Administration has managed to survive a crisis in morale. I wrote in this space a month ago that the President had about made up his mind to move left and was uncertain only about the timing. I have since learned that what determined the timing was a confluence of factors—the unemployment figures, the down-at-the-heel demoralization of the departments, the lull in press and radio, the need for catapulting Robert Jackson into national prominence if he was to be available for the New York governorship race, the reassembling of Congress and the need for action before the tories could get to brooding again over the ills that business has suffered.

Concerning the political success of the President's new move, there is little disagreement here, whatever may be said for public consumption. Mr. Roosevelt has always been strongest in the attack; he is happy in being able once more to assume this role and is spreading the contagion among his followers. He has left the enemy, on the other hand, addled and bewildered. There can be little doubt of his showmanship. The daring succession of speeches by his lieutenants and himself, the deft turning of what might have proved a fatal attack on the Administration because of mounting unemployment into an attack on big business, the handling of the Panay incident so as to capture public attention, and the linking of big armaments with the fight against the depression—these prove once more that Mr. Roosevelt knows how to provide circuses for a distraught people. What is far less clear is whether he can provide bread as well, and how he proposes to deal with the grim and intractable material not of politics but of economics.

Not all the speeches have been just verbal pyrotechnics. But they have been perilously close to it. There are many who have wondered at the "violence" of Mr. Ickes's speech, and Mr. Jackson's, while more substantial, contained some strong medicine. But it is understood that the President allowed them to talk that way—perhaps even encouraged them—because it was an effective riposte to the recent Wall Street talk. It was a way of saying to the New York banking and industrialist group who have been running down the Washington bureaucrats, and whose muttered threats about direct fascism have been leaking through to the White House, "Well, here's the sort of demagogic material we have, if we want to use it. In an exchange of demagogic strength, let's see who has the edge." Which proves very little more than that Mr. Roosevelt is a born ringmaster.

If you ask for action rather than words around here, the answer you get is that to fight a war you must have soldiers, and that before the President can fight either the depression or capitalism, he must first command his own party battalions. He will need all his skill for that task, because the second Civil War is still being fought in the halls of Congress, and along with the secession of the South there is the threatened secession of the New York delegation as well. That is why the two big events of the past week, in their repercussions on Washington, have been events in local politics—Lister Hill's victory in Alabama and the auspicious start of the Robert H. Jackson boom for Governor of New York.

Hill, running on a straight New Deal platform, licked the stuffing out of Tom Heflin in the primary race to determine the successor to Justice Black's seat in the Senate, which Mrs. Dixie Graves has been occupying in the interim. I am told that the politicos here had been predicting either a Heflin victory or a very close race, since plenty of utility and industrialist money was poured into the Heflin campaign. The issue was clearly the wage-hour bill, and so far was Hill from pulling his punches in defense of the bill that he came back from his campaign to the House, of which he is a member, in order to vote against recommittal of the measure. The spirit of the whole progressive group in Congress has picked up because of this victory. It is taken to indicate that the incredibly reactionary Southern bloc by no means represents the Southern rank and file, although it may represent the textile-mill owners, steel manufacturers, and lumber kings of the South. The Hill majority, which was large, is all the more impressive because even the labor strength in Alabama, concentrated at Birmingham, is A. F. of L. Since the wage-hour bill was strongly opposed by William Green, Hill's victory may indicate not only that the South is not represented by its Congressmen, but that the A. F. of L. is not represented by its officers. These conclusions would be more persuasive, of course, if it were anyone except doddering Tom Heflin who had been beaten, and if this were not his third successive defeat. Nevertheless, it has made the Southern tories in Congress jittery.

The first concrete result of the attack on monopoly, curiously, has been that Robert H. Jackson is now out in front in the race for the New York governorship. New York is crucial in New Deal calculations, both for its own strength in Congress and because the election of any except firm New Dealers in the coming contests for Governor and Senator would be widely interpreted as a defeat for the President in the labor stronghold of the country. It looks now as if it will be hard to head Jackson off, not because the New York machine has any love for him, but because he is the only man except Senator Wagner who could get the Labor Party indorse-

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ment. There is little belief here that Wagner would allow himself to be drafted for the governorship fight, largely because he is happy here, because the Democrats would lose his seniority rights, and because the other members of the progressive bloc would enter strong protest. They would not regard either of the candidates eager for Wagner's seat—Governor Lehman or Boss Edward J. Flynn of the Bronx—as capable of replacing him.

I find among some of the Administration advisers a strange confidence that the present "recession" will be conquered—a confidence that is disheartening because it is not accompanied by any economic realism to match the political realism with which the place is cluttered. As far as I can see, all that the Administration is relying on to combat the present phase of the depression is the remaining WPA appropriation of a half-billion and the armament appropriation of a billion. Beyond relief and battleships, there is a lingering hope that materials and labor in the building industry will go down in cost, and that the building boom will start.

The most ominous sign that the attack on big business may lead to nothing or worse than nothing was the President's press conference on the day after his message. It was a masterpiece of anti-climax. The progressives had looked for signs of an effective program for dealing with the irresponsible power of business, and what they got instead was a vague reference to the co-

Georges Schreiber

Senator Minton

operative control of inventories by government and business—a reference that sounded rather NRA-ish. The fact is that the ghost of Donald Richberg still hovers over the White House—and Richberg himself not infrequently lends his more substantial presence. I find a tendency here to regard Richberg as an amazing Scheherezade who has found some story-telling secret that allows him to live on from night to night. All the past favorites—Moley, Tugwell, Professor Warren, Hugh Johnson—have been retired, but Richberg lingers on, more dangerous perhaps when he is not in power than when he was. The probable truth of the matter is that it is not so much Richberg that is fascinating as the idea he stood for. The President still believes that capitalism is essentially sound, and needs government merely to smooth out its rough edges. Each time he finds he is wrong, as happened when the big break came two months ago, he gets flustered and thrown off his balance. Then he rights himself again and continues on his way.

To those who urge him to undertake a deliberate program of industrial control, his answer is that all his economic advisers have differing versions of the economic picture, and their advice cancels out. There is some force in this. There are inflationists and deflationists, those who think that only a drastic economic plan will be effective and those who feel that it would be incredibly naive to base an economic plan on the scanty knowledge of the detailed industrial and financial processes that Washington now possesses, those who would break up the big business structures and those who would leave them alone. Most of these battles are waged between theorists and chart experts in the bureaus and commissions, and never reach Congress, which is completely innocent of economic theory and has the amateur's distrust of it. The only exception is the industrial-expansion bill, introduced by Representative Jerry Voorhis of California and based to a considerable extent on the plan set forth in Mordecai Ezekiel's excellent book, "$2,500 a Year." But Ezekiel himself has been in the doghouse for almost two years, so far as the President is concerned. Amid these cross-purposes Mr. Roosevelt's mind turns more to arms and navalism, where he feels himself on firm ground, and away from economics, where (if I may be allowed the pun) he is at sea.

But the time will come when Mr. Roosevelt will enter a new phase. With the present program, even if there is an upward turn this spring, business indices are bound to drop again and unemployment to rise. The President will be compelled to act on the phrase in his message about our potential national income being ninety to a hundred billion a year, and to force production and price policies to gear themselves to a purchasing power that will approach that level. When that time comes, perhaps in 1940, the President will find an old problem reviving itself—the question of the Supreme Court. For there is considerable doubt whether even some of the liberals on the court would be enthusiastic about so vigorous a program of control. That is why the question of the successor to Justice Sutherland is so important now. Such "liberals" as Donald Richberg, Judge Harold Stephens, and Judge Bratton, whose names have been mentioned, might turn out to be frail supports. Senator Minton of Indiana and Solicitor General Stanley F. Reed are most prominently discussed, but the liberalism of both is an unknown quantity. Minton stands up as one of the better progressive Senators, and the appointment would come well as a reward. But there is little more to say for it. Reed is a good lawyer and has won his court cases, but much the same applies to him. It is thought that he will be held in reserve until Justice McReynolds resigns. The chances are that the selection will be from the Middle or Far West, and Lloyd Garrison, Governor La Follette, and Governor Murphy have been mentioned. But here again, the best guess is that Mr. Roosevelt will do the incalculable.

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Fighting Fascism by Law

BY LUCILLE B. MILNER

WHEN, after considerable verbal warfare in Parliament and press, England passed its Public Order Act early in 1937, optimistic anti-fascist forces hoped that here was a positive cure for the black-shirted plague that had been festering on the island. But only two months after the passage of the act, London witnessed the emergence of anti-Semitism as a political issue for the first time in the long history of the County Council. Hooliganism unparalleled in British political life marked the March elections, with Sir Oswald Mosley baiting the Jews at their very doorsteps in East London and demanding a "mandate on this Jewish question." Gangs of fascists wearing British Union of Fascists badges and carrying the Union Jack paraded through the Jewish sector shouting anti-Jewish slogans: "We gotta get rid of the Yids"; "Perish Judah"; "Roll on the pogrom." Shops were wrecked and citizens were brutally assaulted.

Fascist candidates polled almost 8,000 votes in three London districts—18 per cent of the total vote. As a result there was an intensification of Jew-baiting and violence, followed by a period of comparative quiet. "The grosser forms of Jew-baiting diminished," according to the Commissioner of Police. But not for long. A report of the National Council for Civil Liberties presents an alarming list of outrages in the Jewish district. On May 4, at a large fascist meeting in Glasshouse Street, Mick Clarke, known as the Julius Streicher of the British Union of Fascists, indulged in anti-Semitic taunts through a microphone from the top of a van. After the meeting the crowd, escorted by foot and mounted police, marched through Whitechapel shouting: "Dirty Jew bastards . . . get back to Palestine." In June a fifteen-year-old Jewish boy, on his way home from work at midnight, was knocked to the ground, viciously kicked about the head and face, and left unconscious with a serious injury to one eye. In July an East End shopkeeper, opening his door late one night, was met by two fascists who yelled: "Filthy Jew, we'll settle you later on." A few days later three men walking through Bethnal Green were attacked by a band of fascists; one, an elderly man, was beaten on the face with the buckle of a belt and severely injured. A bomb which failed to explode was thrown at a Jewish shop. A shopkeeper's supply of eggs was destroyed. Fascists whitewashed the initials "P. J." (Perish Judah) on a shop front, declaring the symbol stood for "Poor Jews." Investigators report that almost every evening some trouble develops in the Jewish districts.

It is generally believed that police partiality and police-court leniency are responsible for the continuance of these outrages, and that the Home Office has permitted this state of affairs to reach its present proportions. An increase in the number of police in the Jewish district and the introduction of nightly patrols and plain-clothes officers have been of little avail. Actually, there has been an increase in the number of assaults on Jews since these steps were taken, and there is considerable evidence to prove that the plain-clothes officers are the worst offenders. No improvement can be expected, responsible individuals in the district insist, until the police are instructed by the Home Secretary and the Commissioner of Police to enforce the Public Order Act impartially.

Cases of obvious police leniency are many. At the fascist demonstration in Glasshouse Street on May 4, police were present in large numbers, but made no attempt to put an end to Mick Clarke's anti-Semitic tirade. No curb was attempted in July when Clarke led a procession of fascists through East London, singing provocative songs and obstructing traffic in direct violation of the ban imposed by the Commissioner of Police on all processions in that section; or at another fascist meeting where the speaker attacked prominent living Jews, including Lord Melchett, and described them as "hook-nosed, yellow-skinned, dirty Jewish swine"; or at still another meeting where the fascist speaker referred to Jews as "venereal-ridden vagrants." All these utterances are offenses under the Public Order Act, which prohibits insulting words and behavior from which a breach of peace might result. Yet in each case the police officers refused to issue a summons against the speakers.

Police-court magistrates have shown provocative leniency toward those offenders who have been haled into court. On one occasion, when twenty fascists had attacked four men, the magistrate discharged the assailants with the mere comment that it was unwise for private individuals to take the law into their own hands. In another case the magistrate imposed only a small fine, remarking, "I can see you are decent young fellows." After fascists had assaulted a Jewish storekeeper and damaged his property, the magistrate at the Old Street Police Court chided them for behaving "very stupidly." One of two men summoned to court for insulting behavior at an East End meeting had been before the court on a similar charge six months earlier and been promised imprisonment if his offense was repeated, but the magistrate decided to give him still another chance.

Occasionally, however, so-called violations of the Public Order Act are prosecuted. A newspaper vender calling out the caption on his placard, "André executed by Nazis," was charged by the police with using insulting words and behavior likely to cause a breach of the peace, although the words were true. At an exhibition at Hendon Aerodrome a man was charged with insulting be-

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havior because he put up a small pacifist poster on a fence near the aerodrome. A man was convicted of using insulting words when he called out "Give us bread!" at a demonstration of the unemployed.

A striking example of discrimination against anti-fascists was the charge of mounted police into a Thurloe Square meeting called to protest against the repeated denial of the use of Albert Hall to anti-fascist organizations. The speakers included a clergyman, a Liberal candidate for Parliament, and a member of the Labor Party. The meeting was orderly. At 9 p.m., during the clergyman's address, a squad of mounted police rode their horses into the crowd, swinging their clubs indiscriminately and injuring many persons. Public indignation was aroused and a government inquiry demanded. But the Home Office refused to intervene. An unofficial inquiry was set up by the National Council for Civil Liberties, and in a preface to the report of the investigating committee Harold J. Laski, professor of political science at the University of London, wrote: "There is no use denying that there is an ugly body of suspicion abroad about police behavior in dealing with the problems created by the fascist movement." In a public address A. M. Wall, secretary of the London Trades Council, declared:

> I am appalled by the glaring instances of the failure of the authorities to enforce adequately the law against Sir Oswald Mosley and his associates. The British brand of fascists have slavishly copied the Jew-baiting tactics of Hitler. Their use of insulting epithets and filthy language has, however, probably excelled even the most vulgar of Hitler's henchmen, and I am filled with apprehension by the failure of the authorities to apply the law [Public Order Act] to these cases. Perhaps a reason why the police hesitate to charge these ruffians is the leniency shown by magistrates when convictions have been secured.

The Public Order Act was passed in January, 1937, in response to the demand of certain Liberal and Labor members of Parliament for legislation to deal with the militarization of politics and the wearing of semi-military uniforms. Friends of civil liberties pointed out that the existing law was satisfactory if the police would exercise its powers against the fascists as it had against labor and radical leaders, and warned against the dangers of further legislation of this type. When the text of the government's bill was published, it was found to go much farther than the existing crisis. Repressive measures which the government had had under consideration for over two years were included. The opposition was ineffectual, and the government measure was passed.

The act makes it an offense to wear political uniforms in any public place or at any public meeting, but police chiefs may sanction the wearing of political uniforms in public for any "ceremonial anniversary or other special occasions" if it is believed that this will not cause public disorder. This loophole practically nullifies the section, for "anniversaries" and "special occasions" are the very times when the wearing of the uniform may be provocative. A political uniform is not defined in the act; it rests with the magistrate or judge to decide what constitutes such a uniform.

Members of an association, the act provides, may not be trained or equipped for the purpose of usurping the functions of the police or of the armed forces of the Crown, or "for the use or display of physical force in promoting any political object," or merely "arouse reasonable apprehension" that they are so trained.

Police chiefs are given discretionary and virtually dictatorial powers to forbid processions if they have a "reasonable ground" for fearing serious public disorder. Further, the police chief may apply to the local council for an order prohibiting all public processions for a period not exceeding three months. The requirement of an order from the local authorities was considered a concession to members of Parliament who insisted upon some slight element of democratic control. But shortly after the act was passed, the Home Secretary circularized local authorities advising them to delegate these powers to their Watch Committee. Since the police chief is the executive officer of the Watch Committee, this advice voided the slight concession. Police chiefs may also forbid banners bearing provocative slogans. Since it is well known that the fascist groups carry only Union Jacks and black flags similar to Italian military standards, and that trade unions and democratic organizations use banners bearing slogans, this clause is considered a direct attempt to interfere with the expression of legitimate political opinion by labor, liberal, and radical groups.

The section of the old law penalizing the use of "threatening, abusive, or insulting words or behavior" whereby a breach of the peace is likely to occur formerly applied only to streets and public places in large towns, but the act extends the offense to the entire country and to meetings held even in private halls. The warning of liberals that this section might be abused has been justified by the behavior of pro-fascist police officers and courts. In the Harworth Colliery strike the section was used against the miners in a half-dozen or more cases.

The Public Order Act has had one good effect and one only. It has deprived the fascists of uniforms which had proved valuable in advertising and recruiting. Marching in mufti, the British Union of Fascists has lost much of its conquering-army glamor. However, while the uniform was an aid in recruiting members to the Mosley forces, it is questionable whether the ban on it has actually affected their numbers. The decline in Mosley's strength evidenced by the defeat of his candidates in the November elections was due more to financial difficulties and the defection of some prominent members than to the act. In addition to the British Union of Fascists certain other groups of a more or less political nature wore uniforms. Sections of the Independent Labor Party wore red shirts, and the Social Credit Party displayed green shirts. These too are banned by the law. Such organizations as the Boy Scouts and the Salvation Army continue to wear uniforms because they are regarded as non-political.

The act has enormously increased the power of the police to interfere with the legitimate activities of democratic and left-wing organizations. For instance, the Com-

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missioner of the London Police on June 21 prohibited *all* political processions in East London for a period of twelve weeks and recently renewed the ban for another six months. Since the act gives the authorities the power to place a ban on any kind of procession which is likely to cause a breach of peace, the general order was unnecessary. It has become obvious that when circumstances necessitate any kind of action against fascists, the government uses the opportunity to take action also against democratic groups.

Yale Needs the C.I.O.

BY GEORGE BUTLER

New Haven, January 8

YALE UNIVERSITY is one of the largest educational institutions in the world, spending over $8,000,000 each year and employing thousands of professional and non-professional workers in its colossal plant. It is also one of the most prosperous institutions of its kind. Among the members of the Yale Corporation are representatives of the Chase National Bank, the New York Trust Company, the Morgan interests, United States Steel, and various railroads and public utilities.

Since Yale University is such a large and prosperous and well-governed institution, one might expect it to maintain model labor standards. What are the facts? A few years ago one of the professors became interested in this question and attempted to study hours and working conditions in Yale and other institutions of higher learning. But when the Yale treasurer heard of the project, he protested to the dean of the Divinity School, saying that thousands of dollars were at stake. The dean tactfully suggested to the professor that he turn his researches into less dangerous channels. An unhampered investigator, however, soon discovers that in the Divinity School itself wages and working conditions for the lower-paid employees lag far behind the best practice. Maids, most of the janitors, and all of the gatemen work a seven-day week. Practically all service employees work intolerably long hours. None receive adequate compensation. Few receive vacations with pay.

Consider Mrs. X, who has charge of the steam table in the refectory. Mrs. X starts work at 7:30 a. m. and finishes at 6:45 p. m. She is supposed to have three-quarters of an hour free in the morning and two in the afternoon, but she lives too far away to go home and Yale provides no rest room for her. This system of long hours split by rest periods but with no rest rooms provided is practiced throughout the university. Mrs. X receives $12 a week for her six-day week. And at the start of the school year she must work many hours of overtime without pay.

Maids throughout the university work five hours a day seven days a week, and receive $8.75. Mrs. Y, a Law School maid, must clean fifteen suites, or forty-five rooms, in five hours. She was responsible for only thirty-six rooms until Yale's economy program went into effect a few years ago. Since almost all maids and janitors are laid off for the entire summer vacation, Mrs. Y's yearly wage is $332.50.

Compare these conditions with those in the laundry industry of Connecticut. According to the official survey of 1935, the median wage for women laundry workers in cities of 100,000 and over is 29.1 cents an hour. Yale's rate is 25 cents. Of 967 women employed in laundries, only 15 received less than 25 cents an hour. In other words, more than 98 per cent of the women laundry workers of Connecticut received as much as or more than the maids in Yale buildings. Yet not Yale but the laundry business is considered a sweatshop industry.

Connecticut laundries pay male workers a median wage of 38.8 cents an hour. Yale University pays a night watchman, whose position is one of trust and responsibility, $25 a week for ten hours a night, seven nights one week, six the next. Averaging sixty-five hours a week, he receives 38.5 cents an hour.

The New Haven Hospital receives $50,000 a year from Yale University because of its close relationship to the medical and nursing schools. A study of wages paid non-professional help, such as orderlies, ward helpers, messengers, and kitchen assistants, shows that four-fifths of them receive an average wage of $51.30 per month, or $615 a year—hardly a health and decency wage. True, meals are supposed to be furnished to these workers, but no allowance is made for family men who prefer their meals at home. The hospital workers also work long hours, averaging 53.7 a week.

During the depression the Yale Corporation did not reduce the salaries of professors and deans in the $10,000 class, but it cut the pay of the lowest workers and laid many of them off. In the main library, for instance, seven maintenance persons were discharged, their duties being added to those of the workers who remained. In one of the departmental libraries so many were discharged that the librarian said it was physically impossible for those who were left to handle the work. In 1935 wages of about 600 of the lowest-paid workers were reduced 5 and 10 per cent. Janitors were cut from $20.77 a week to $20 a week; library maintenance workers from $23.07 to $22; campus police and gate porters from $38.50 and $24.50 to $35 and $22, respectively.

As a result of this economy program, $28,000 was saved, not a large item in the Yale budget. Many students protested vigorously in letters to the *Yale Daily News* and the *Alumni Weekly,* pointing out that a 1 per cent cut in faculty and administrative salaries would have

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saved $30,000, or more than was saved by the 5 and 10 per cent cuts in workers' wages. David B. McCalmont, '32, editor-in-chief of the *Yale Law Journal,* wrote:

> The affair is probably just an April Fool false rumor, for the university seems to be spending just as much money as ever on luxurious upholstery to soothe our backs, expensive wood carvings to delight our eyes, fertilizer for the lawns to delight our noses, and new books on stained-glass windows and ancient English poetry to satisfy our aesthetic sense. For these noble purposes, to be sure, our janitors will be more than willing to give up the luxury of riding two or three miles to and from work on a trolley car, or the luxury of serving milk to their children.

With the return of prosperity and generous gifts, Yale restored the pay cuts in the academic year 1936-37.

Members of the Divinity School Student Council last spring sent a vigorous protest to President Angell about the inhuman working conditions which obtained at the Divinity School. After waiting two weeks and receiving no reply, they tried to obtain an appointment with Dr. Angell. They were referred to the associate treasurer and comptroller, Mr. Farnum, who granted them an interview late in May, 1937. In response to a request that Sunday work be abolished at the Divinity School, Mr. Farnum said that since the work was light, he felt that a seven-day week was good for the employees—it kept them occupied and out of trouble. He said further that he had received no complaint from the employees concerned, and he was sure there would have been no trouble if agitators had not stirred them up. As a result of this interview, the Student Council appointed a continuation committee to carry the matter farther this year. That it will be carried farther is now assured by the promise of Michael F. Widman, Jr., regional director of the C. I. O. for New England, of an immediate organizational drive among Yale's service employees. The drive is to be aided by a permanent student committee and will have the support of a specially created alumni advisory committee for which Alfred M. Bingham has consented to serve as secretary.

The head of the New Haven Charities told me that not only are Yale employees forced on relief during the summer months, but that even during the winter some of them unfortunately blessed with big families receive supplementary relief to piece out Yale's parsimony. Doubtless New Haven citizens will be glad to know that their welfare agencies keep Yale's workers from starving during the summer. Some may even consider it a privilege to pay taxes and contribute to the Community Chest, knowing that such contributions make it possible for Yale's workers to buy milk for their children. How happy should New Haven taxpayers be to know that their tax money is in reality a contribution for God, for Country, and for Yale!

Probably few corporations in the country, from Republic Steel to Henry Ford, are in more desperate need of the C. I. O. than Yale.

Mussolini Schemes for Egypt

BY LEONARD CARLTON

THE imperial systems of both hemispheres watch with a jealous eye the half-dozen strategic centers of military power. Singapore, Gibraltar, the Dardanelles, Suez, the Panama Canal—all of these are key points which may determine the outcome of future wars. Today the attention of the world is riveted on events in Egypt. An eighteen-year-old king dismisses his government and unrest sweeps the land, but the ratio of royal to civil power is a domestic issue, of little importance beyond the nation's borders. Europe's chancelleries are concerned about something quite different: does the action of King Farouk foreshadow a changing foreign policy at Cairo which will replace London with Rome as guardian, policeman, and adviser?

It is still too early to say with assurance what Farouk and his advisers have in mind, but the chances are that no major shift in Egypt's international orientation is impending. Italy cannot meet the bills, equip and pay the army, extend the loans which an ambitious ruler wants. Mussolini is aggressive; Chamberlain is willing to bargain. Cairo knows that nothing would end this desirable state of affairs more quickly than a turn toward Rome. London is reasonable now, but that does not mean—and King Farouk knows it—that John Bull will let control of the land bordering the Suez slip through his fingers.

In the bitter rivalry between Italy and Great Britain over Mediterranean supremacy, the land of the pyramids is the ace of trumps. Those who have viewed Mussolini's pact with Germany as a transitory phase of Italian foreign policy have paid inadequate attention to the shifts in basic strategy which Rome has carried out since 1935. There is nothing temporary in a policy which looks on with complete tranquillity at the spectacle of Germany making hay along the Danube but reacts galvanically to every ripple on the surface of the Mediterranean. General Vallee, Under Secretary for Air, recently commented on the "radical change which has occurred in the strategic field assigned to our air arm, under which the center of gravity has clearly shifted from the valley of the Po toward the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, and the Indian Ocean." In the development of naval and air bases there has been a definite shift eastward; Taranto, for example, is being developed at the expense of Spezia, and Messina

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and Brindisi are receiving attention which formerly would have gone to Venice and Pola.

Twice in the last two years Italy has struck at France and Great Britain by moving troops to North Africa. In 1935 the Duce answered League of Nations sanctions by swelling his Libyan garrison to some 50,000 men. This autumn, when there were indications that France was about to open its border to allow shipment of arms to Loyalist Spain, one entire army corps was assembled on Libyan soil and the organization of another begun for a total of about 80,000 men. Egypt, to be sure, was assured that these reinforcements were no threat to it, but the British and Egyptian military organizations have been speeding up their preparations against attack ever since. Maneuvers have been held, appropriations increased, soldiers moved to their desert stations, and military training extended. Both Cairo and London know that there is only one military justification for such a striking force to the westward. They know that the Duce as early as 1924 declared, "We must have Egypt; we shall be great only if we can get Egypt."

If Mussolini's pretensions to empire are to be maintained, he must break the British hold on the bottlenecks at Gibraltar and Suez. The clear object of the Italian navy's building program is to convert an excellent force of small craft eminently suitable for operations in narrow waters into a full-fledged high-seas fleet. As General Franco makes the English position at Gibraltar increasingly precarious, so the flames are creeping closer to Suez. The only great public-works project which Italy has completed since the Ethiopian campaign is the $5,000,000 trans-Libyan road—pointed unmistakably at the heart of Britain's empire.

How much does London know of these plans? Surely enough to take them seriously. In June, 1936, Geoffrey Mander, a Liberal M. P. asked Anthony Eden if he would "state the nature of the plans for an Italian attack on Egypt which were found in the Italian staff plane that crashed in the Sudan in August, 1935 . . . and what representations were made to the Italian government on the matter and what action was taken." He got little satisfaction from the cautious Foreign Secretary, of course, but it is worth noting that the British military, in September, 1935, began to develop the little desert port of Mersa Matruth, 140 miles from the Libyan frontier, and in four months made it a strong right flank against invasion from the west. By the end of 1935 the Egyptian government had decided to extend the Alexandria-Fuka railroad to Mersa Matruh, a distance of forty-nine miles. And in the incredibly short time of seventy-seven days the rails were laid. It almost seems as if there were some point to Mr. Mander's question.

Egypt, without question, is the strategic center of the British Empire. Admiral Mahan wrote in 1900:

> Egypt in military situation approaches the ideal; for to a local concentration of forces, defensive and offensive, operative in two directions, toward Gibraltar or toward India, it adds several streams of supply, so diverse in origin that no one navy can take position to intercept them all. . . . If the Mediterranean be blocked, the Red Sea remains, always the shortest route to India. . . . The truer solution for a state already holding Malta and Gibraltar would seem to be to grasp Egypt firmly, to consolidate local tenure there, and to establish in India, Australia, and the Cape sources of supply of ammunition and arms, against the chance of temporary interruption on the side of England.

Its importance may decrease when the Admiralty achieves its dream of an independent Far Eastern fleet based on Singapore, but at present the ability to get to Singapore quickly is crucial, and the Cape route to China takes a good seventeen days longer than by way of Suez. At least one Japanese authority has frankly admitted that the outcome of an Anglo-Japanese war would depend in large measure on London's ability to send a battle fleet to its great Far Eastern base in time. If Japan's good friend at Rome can block the passage of warships through "his" sea, Great Britain must be able to base a fleet in the eastern Mediterranean.

Actually, how well can Egypt be defended? Developments of the twentieth century have certainly weakened its position. In a British Admiralty report issued in 1912 it was laid down that no possible opponent should be permitted to hold a naval base less than one thousand miles from Suez, or in other words east of Malta. Italy now has two within the proscribed area—in the Dodecanese Islands of the Aegean and in Libya at Tobruk, only 60 miles from the Egyptian border and less than 450 from Port Said. Italy's naval strength is often sensationally overestimated. A strong British naval force in the eastern Mediterranean should be able to protect its bases and keep the Haifa pipe line and the Suez Canal safe from any purely naval attack. Mussolini's announced new building program, which will give him the largest number of submarines of any navy, will, however, make the task more difficult.

To some extent the chances of a successful land campaign against Egypt from the west will be determined by naval control. Should the British retain freedom of movement in the eastern Mediterranean, the Libyan seacoast road along which the large mechanized Italian army would have to travel would be under the fire of the fleet's big guns. The Italians are seeking to counteract this threat by building desert roads to the Egyptian frontier at more southerly points. One of these is said to reach the border at Jarabul, while another runs from Tobruck to the Sudan at Oweinat. There is little doubt that the army in Libya is becoming formidable. Last September the Cairo correspondent of the London *Daily Herald* reported that the Italians were organizing mechanized forces for desert service made up of equal numbers of air-borne, motorized, and camel-mounted troops, and that native Askari soldiers were being sent into the interior while newly arrived, highly trained Italians were taking over the border positions. He asserted that great stores of food, fuel, and munitions were being accumulated along the strategic roads.

But it is the air weapon which has stripped Egypt of its island-on-the-land position. The new Italian bombers

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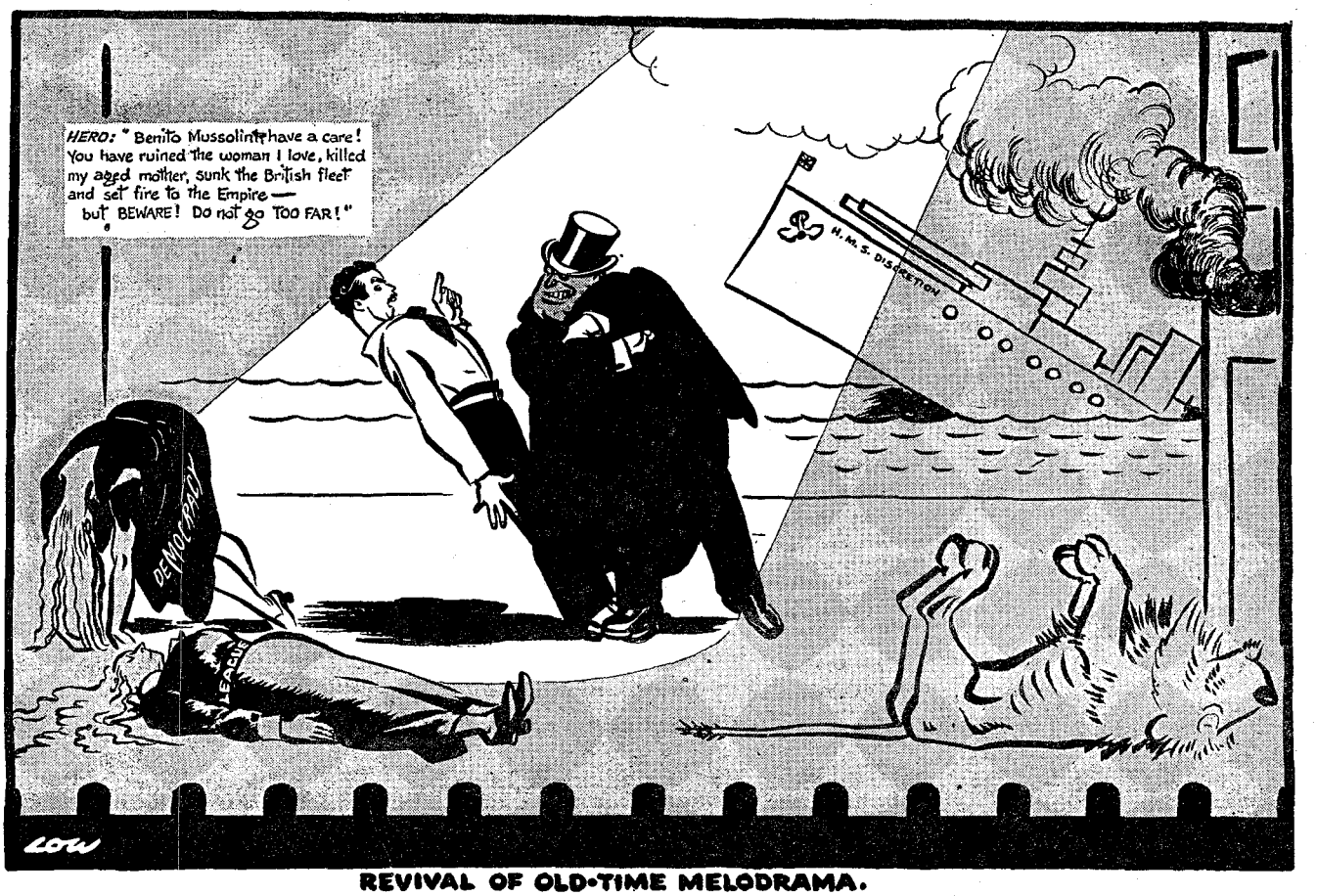
care little for the 400 miles of desert to the west or the 90 miles of cruel, rocky terrain which lie between the Nile Valley and the Gulf of Suez. The lack of bases in the immediate vicinity of Suez should not be too great a handicap. In last summer's Sicily maneuvers, air-force units working from widely distributed bases covered as much as 560 miles on the flight to their objectives. Planes operating from Ethiopia would be only from 100 to 250 miles from important centers in the Sudan.

Egypt has indeed cause to fear the air raid. Not only are its cities vulnerable, but it must guard the Suez Canal, the all-important Nile irrigation barrages, and the great dams of the Sudan which control floods and store the water on which the farmer depends for his crops. Italy, for its part, has pioneered in the development of long-range bombers. In the Savoia-Marchetti 79 three-engined bomber, the Regia Aeronautica boasts one of the world's best. Visitors to last year's Milan air show were impressed with a new twin-engined craft, the Piaggio 32 bomber, which is said to maneuver like a small plane and to be able to work with a minimum of fighter protection. It has a stated speed of 260 miles per hour carrying a load of 7,700 pounds, and is reported already in quantity production.

What is Great Britain going to do about it? Ironically enough, the nationalist agitation which gave Prime Minister Baldwin a severe headache in 1935 has resulted in an Egyptian defense organization much superior to that which London would otherwise have been able to command. The very concessions which the Wafd Party fought for are taking a considerable burden off English shoulders. A British military mission has been transforming an army of some 13,000 men, without machine-guns, armored cars, or tanks, into a strongly mechanized and motorized force of twice that size with a strong air force. The new Premier, announcing his adherence to the Anglo-Egyptian treaty clauses, has talked about raising an Egyptian army of 50,000 men. Two Egyptian infantry battalions have moved into the Sudan, closed to them for the past thirteen years. It is reported that they will take over the development of Port Sudan, the defense of Khartoum's great Gebel Aulia dam, furnish coastal defense, searchlight, and anti-aircraft units, and patrol the Eritrean and Ethiopian borders.

Even the pending withdrawal of British troops from Cairo and Alexandria will not be the blow it might once have been. Since the Romans the conquerors of Egypt have held it by garrisons at Alexandria, Cairo, and Aswan. Until the Anglo-Egyptian treaty restrained their infantry to the canal zone, the British had held to the same strategic disposition, for which, in fact, there was considerable military justification in the lack of desert roads and railroads necessary for freedom of maneuver. These are now being built and extended. Mechanization leads to mobility, and today Cairo lies within two hours of the canal areas. Moreover, squadrons of the Royal Air Force are to remain in the areas which will be evacuated by the infantry.

The defense of Egypt depends on the cooperation of the Egyptian throne and government with the British government. As has already been said, this will most probably be continued. In any case, however, the land of the pyramids is likely to see harsh and bloody days. If Italy and England fight they will fight about Egypt first.


HERO: "Benito Mussolini have a care! You have ruined the woman I love, killed my aged mother, sunk the British fleet and set fire to the Empire— but BEWARE! Do not go TOO FAR!"
H.M.S. DISCRETION
DEMOCRACY
LEAGUE
LOW

REVIVAL OF OLD-TIME MELODRAMA.

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

That War Referendum

BELIEVING that there is much public misunderstanding of the Ludlow war-referendum proposal—a misunderstanding sedulously cultivated in reactionary and military circles and by all who would profit by war—I have endeavored to bring together the arguments against the proposed amendment and the answers to them. If any important ones have been overlooked, it is not intentional but due to necessary space limits.

1. The referendum would be a blow to our whole system of representative government.

Answer: A national referendum in which the people could vote on important issues has been successively urged by Theodore Roosevelt, William J. Bryan, Robert La Follette, Sr., Woodrow Wilson, and, I believe, Franklin Roosevelt. War is the most important of all issues. The referendum is in use in many American states, notably in New York; it has for centuries been in use in the democracy of Switzerland. No injury to representative government arises from the use of referendums.

2. The referendum will cripple our diplomacy and tie the President's hands.

Answer: This is true only if diplomacy and the President cannot function without being prepared to use war as an instrument of national policy—this use of war was formally renounced by the United States when it pledged its name and honor to the Kellogg Peace Pact. The purpose of the Ludlow referendum is to deprive the Executive of the war-making power as far as possible.

3. The President can be trusted not to put us into war; he will know when the cause is just and what the people want.

Answer: General Grant denounced the war in Mexico, in which he served as an officer, "as one of the most unjust ever waged by a stronger against a weaker nation"; he called it "unholy." In the Spanish War, as history now records, Spain surrendered to the United States completely *before* President McKinley went to Congress asking for a declaration of war. The President deceived Congress by withholding the Spanish surrender. James Ford Rhodes and other historians assert that this was done for purely political reasons, to strengthen the Republican Party. Mr. Wilson put the country into war seven times and only once asked consent of Congress.

4. The Congress can be trusted to vote as the people wish because the people are its constituents.

Answer: As shown above, the war-making power, lodged by the Constitution in the hands of Congress, has been usurped by the Executive, who can and does render Congress impotent to exercise its free will by using the prestige of his office, the power of Presidential propaganda, and even, as did Woodrow Wilson in the case of the armed-ship bill, public denunciation of the legislators opposing him as "twelve wilful little men." By the use of army and navy and the diplomatic service the President can maneuver us into a position where there is nothing left for Congress to do but to vote yes.

5. But this state of affairs will not be altered if the referendum is voted because the President will still be commander-in-chief of army and navy and head of the diplomatic service, and will still have the power of prestige and propaganda.

Answer: This is true. A President can put this country into war no matter what laws may be framed, until such time as the American people definitely forbid the resort to war. The referendum will, however, slow up the President, put an additional brake upon him, and impress upon him the desire of the people to reserve to themselves the war-making power. President Roosevelt admitted the present control by the President when he said at Chautauqua on August 14, 1936: "Nevertheless . . . the effective maintenance of American neutrality depends today, as in the past, on the wisdom and determination of whoever at the moment occupy the offices of President and Secretary of State."

6. The President, bearing his tremendous responsibilities for the maintenance of peace, is less likely to be swayed by passion or propaganda than are the people, who may be misled by demagogues using the radio and other means of communication.

Answer: The case of McKinley is again in point here. But the best witness is Franklin D. Roosevelt, who in the same speech at Chautauqua declared that if war should break out again, thousands of Americans would attempt to break down our neutrality, "seeking immediate riches—fools' gold." He continued: "To resist the clamor of that greed, if war should come, would require the unswerving support of all Americans who love peace." He demanded that the nation, confronted with a choice between profits and peace, should answer, "We choose peace"; and he said, "The answer will be clear and for all practical purposes unanimous." He gave us the truthful picture of a President subject, when war nears, to terrific pressure by interested groups, as Wilson was in 1914-17, to put us into war for the sake of profits. The passage of the referendum would relieve the Executive to *some* extent of such pressure. As for the possibility that the people may be misled by propaganda and induced to vote for war, there can be no doubt that that may happen. It is a risk of democracy, and it pertains not only to war but to every election. But at least the

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parents of the boys then about to die, and the boys themselves if twenty-one, will have voted on their fate.

7. A referendum would advertise the differences of opinion and so encourage possible enemies.

Answer: There has never yet been a war fought by the United States to which there was not tremendous opposition up to the very moment when war was declared—even in 1812. There is much evidence to show that had there been a referendum in the United States in 1917, while the Atlantic seaboard would have voted for war, the people in the West would have voted no. There will always be differences of opinion in Congress as to any war, as well as in the public press.

8. The country may be attacked, in which case (a) there will be no time to take a vote, and (b) the President and the military forces will be weakened if not estopped by the referendum.

Answer: (a) The amendment will not be operative if the country is attacked, and every foreign war in which the United States has engaged has approached slowly; months and years of preparation have preceded the declaration. A vote could be taken today on whether the people of the United States wish this country to go to war with Japan or not. It is preposterous to assert that there would be long delays in ascertaining the people's will by the use of existing or new electoral machinery. A vote could be obtained within seventy-two hours, since by means of the radio the government could notify the remotest hamlet what the question was and when the voting. (b) The referendum will offer no grounds for the army and navy to cease preparing for hostilities. If, as Mr. Stimson declares, the necessity of waiting for a decision "would destroy the initiative and spirit of our personnel," there must be something very wrong with that personnel and its leadership.

9. As Mr. Stimson asserts, "the power and speed of modern naval and air attacks" would make possible in twenty-four hours "a devastating blow upon one of our great cities and its neighboring industrial centers and the landing within a week of 100,000 men . . . "

Answer: This is the purest guesswork. It presupposes the defeat of the fleet, the passing of all mines, the conquest of the coast defenses of the harbor, and ability to force a landing. If one begins by conceding everything to the enemy, one can prove the conquest of Washington in two weeks. Obviously Mr. Stimson is entirely misleading when he declares that an army of 100,000 men could be landed a week after a surprise attack. There is no nation except England which has the merchant fleet to move such a force and its impedimenta quickly. It is absolutely unthinkable that the preparation for such a gigantic undertaking, which must use hundreds of ships loaded with tanks, airplanes, poison gas, heavy and light artillery, plus enormous supplies of ammunition and gasoline, could be hidden. There are only a dozen ships which could move soldiers across the ocean in a week.

10. But naval ships might be sunk and the government could not mobilize the nation for self-defense.

Answer: If every ship in our Asiatic squadron were sunk tomorrow by Japan, we should have plenty of time simultaneously to mobilize and to await the taking of the referendum on whether the American people wished to plunge the country into war to revenge the loss of those ships. Further, the question is an indictment of our military and naval preparations. If our war departments have today no plans for immediate mobilization of the first and second lines of defense in case of attack, then they are entirely incompetent to defend us.

11. Why should we, as Mr. Stimson asks, take up with "untried panaceas" in this critical hour of the world's history?

Answer: We progress only by trying new methods and measures. Our whole neutrality legislation, whether good or bad, is a new venture in diplomacy. There is no precedent for it to be found anywhere; it is a complete reversal of our historic policy. Yet no fair-minded judge will deny that that legislation was passed three times in response to the overwhelming sentiment of the American people. It may be an unsatisfactory device to keep us out of war, but the American people wanted it and were not deterred by the fact that it was an "untried panacea."

12. The referendum would fatally cripple, if not end, the Monroe Doctrine.

Answer: If this is true it presupposes that the American people would decline to fight to protect Central or South American nations from European attack. Is there any reason why they should not decide whether they wish to sacrifice their sons, the national wealth, perhaps our institutions, to keep Germans out of Brazil or the Argentine? They are competent and have the right to pass upon such a question. As a matter of fact, Senator La Follette's alternative to the Ludlow plan specially exempts cases in which there is an attack on the territory of any North American or Caribbean nation.

13. The amendment cannot be phrased to cover every case.

Answer: This argument is true, but it is not controlling. No neutrality legislation can be framed which will foresee every possible contingency, but that is no reason why there should not be the best possible neutrality laws which it is in our power to draft. Mr. Ludlow's referendum is intended for debate and amendment.

14. Could not Executive usurpation of the war power be ended and Congress still left in control of it?

Answer: In the eyes of those who support the Ludlow resolution the war-making power should rest only in the hands of the people because a war today, as distinct from the Civil War, or the war with Spain, would jeopardize the very life of the nation, and destroy our democratic institutions. Modern war involves every citizen, probably the children; even if victory comes, it means staggering debts, world-wide industrial depression and unemployment, complete industrial dislocation through the turning over of a large portion of industry to the war machine. There is every evidence that the country would come out of it with a fascist rule established. The American democracy is the most precious thing in the world today. Only the American people should have the right to decide whether its very existence shall be risked by their going to war.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Keeping the Peace

THE FINAL CHOICE: AMERICA BETWEEN EUROPE AND ASIA. By Stephen and Joan Raushenbush. Reynal and Hitchcock: John Day. $2.50.

NOT so long ago a group of New York editors, economists, and authors sat around a table to discuss American foreign policy. Nearly everyone began by taking a stance on one of several high barrels each labeled "IF." IF the great democracies—England, France, the United States, and (by courtesy) Russia—would stick together and take a strong hand with the berserker nations . . . IF the so-called satiated nations would collectively apply economic sanctions, withholding steel, scrap iron, oil, rubber, and credits . . . IF the "haves" would make a really magnanimous gesture and give Herr Have-Not Hitler the old German colonies, plus a loan, plus *Anschluss,* plus a free commercial hand in the Danube basin . . . IF the United States would stick firmly to neutrality-plus-cash-and-carry . . . IF the United States would forget Europe and Asia and fight for socialism at home . . . and so on. Before the evening had ended, every single barrel had been knocked into kindling: each defender of an IF had brilliantly exposed the flimsy nature of every other IF. Whereupon each defender—including yours truly, the writer of this review—went home to reconstruct his barrel on the theory that it is better to have a flimsy barrel than no barrel at all.

The virtue of the Raushenbushes resides in their cantankerous, obstinate, mulish insistence upon analyzing the tacit assumptions that underlie most of the IF's. They start with no *parti pris* for "isolationism" or "internationalism," the two polar abstractions that tend to shut off rational discussion. The historical section of their book traverses a territory made familiar to us by Grattan, Millis, Borchard, and others. But even in going over old ground the Raushenbushes contribute new detail, new insights. Since they are Multiple Causationists, they waste no time trying to isolate the war bacillus: in their opinion the United States entered the World War through the dynamic interaction of cultural predisposition, promise of profits, fear of economic collapse, idiocy in Washington, an obsolete conception of international law that made no provision for technological change in armaments, and many other things. But they are certain that fear of economic collapse (see the Page cablegram) was the final preponderating factor. And since the fear of economic collapse tipped the scales once, the Raushenbushes think that we shall drift belatedly into the next major conflict unless war sales are forcibly held to some norm that is based on peacetime plant requirements and the ability of foreign nations to pay in cash for what they take.

But to come to the IF's. The trouble with them, as the Raushenbushes show, is that they do not arise out of demonstrable realities: as abstractions, they have no one-to-one correspondence with existing groups or interests pursuing certain existing diurnal ends. "IF the great democracies would stick together . . ." Yes, but who leads the democracies and to what ends? Let us assume that "we" as a "liberal" nation ought to champion the cause of the Chinese. Does this mean that the State Department career boys would stand by "us" if and when a triumphant Chinese communism threatened to paint the features of Stalin on the Japanese Rising Sun? Does it mean that United States business—the men who now profit by selling oil and scrap to Japan—would rather see Russia dominate and develop the Orient than sell their own capital goods to a victorious Japan for the industrialization of China? Hearst, after a lifetime of irresponsible cultivation of the Yellow Peril, is now discovering the Peril of Red China. This is merely amusing when taken by itself. But it suggests a conclusion—that American "interests" would let China down should Russia threaten to become a predominating factor in any Far Eastern settlement.

Again, let us assume that Germany and Italy can be licked by force of arms. I am not at all afraid that England, France, the United States, and Russia would come out on the short end of a war with the fascist bloc. But there is no evidence that British and French capital wants to lick either Germany or Italy. All the evidence is, in fact, the other way: the idea of certain powerful British and French interests is seemingly to prop up Hitler and Mussolini domestically, and to finagle them out of any clear-cut victory in Spain or Rumania or elsewhere. Now, how are you going to get finaglers and people who don't want to think of fascists as inevitable enemies to unite on any strong, positive program? Even assuming that they could unite, I cannot visualize the peace resulting from a war against the fascist bloc as being any better than the "peace" we have now. It takes an act of pure faith—yea, one has to be as trusting as the ewe lamb—to believe that progressive elements could maintain control in democratic countries throughout a war. And if the progressive elements couldn't stay in power long enough to dominate the peace, then what is the use of "collective action" to defeat fascism? Would a "democratic" coalition run by a Soviet of Dollar-a-Year Men representing British Tories, French peasants, and United States Morgans and du Ponts be willing to guarantee the right of the defeated and by-that-time revolutionary nations to self-determine their way to communism, even to a democratic communism? If not, would the United States be willing to help police central Europe for the sake of upholding democratic puppet states? The answer to all this would seem to be obvious: imperialism, even defensive imperialism, doesn't mix with communism, nor is American provincialism, always rampant after war, compatible with "mandates" to play God across the water. This same provincialism, when disappointed in the results of a crusade, is apt to turn ugly. Remember the treatment of the wobblies and the breaking of the steel strike in 1919?

The IF about purely economic sanctions is just as unreal as the others: ineffective sanctions are futile, while effective sanctions would very likely lead to war (it is the cornered rat that bites the cat). As for the IF about neutrality-plus-cash-and-carry, the Raushenbushes say "there is no certainty that the United States will reorganize itself domestically to afford peace." It is here that we come to the crux of the matter: there are powerful interests at work in the world that tend to make peace impossible no matter which way liberals turn. If it is collective action that United States liberals want, these interests can be counted on to dominate the collective action and turn it to greedy ends. If neutrality and a Ludlow amend-

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ment are desired, these same interests can be counted on to forestall them or to render them innocuous. A united program for liberal journalists, then, would seem to be this: *to name names and to cite statistics which go to prove that certain groups are blocking both the international and the isolationist roads to peace.* (Eliot Janeway's investigation of the so-called capitalist international is an example of proper technique.) There is no use constructing hopeful programs based on "if" clauses that present falsified pictures of reality.

In the end the Raushenbushes mount a barrel of their own. But their "contract for peace or war," which provides for an implemented super-League with the guns, the war vessels, and the men to beat chiseling nations into line, is a Wellsian fantasy whose chief merit is a negative one: it shows that sovereignty extends no farther than the police power. If and when we do get a real League of Nations, it must be along the lines the Raushenbushes propose. But that is another IF which has no one-to-one correspondence with 1938 reality. If the Raushenbushes intended their "contract for peace or war" as irony, it stands as a fitting close to a superbly hard-headed book. If not, it shows what a hell of a way we still have to go before the Parliament of Man becomes a working proposition. Meanwhile this reviewer will go back to his own neutrality-plus-cash-and-carry barrel with little hope that he is going to be effective but with the assurance that he is going to be no more disillusioned than the collective-action liberals who think *they* are taking the only realistic path. Continued neutrality is probably a vain dream in a world that is marching to war. But a strong neutrality bloc in the United States is a pragmatic desirability *now*. It is desirable because uncertainty about the ultimate stand of any strong nation means more hesitant betting by the other nations as they go about playing the great poker game of balancing the power.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

Dance Through the Ages

WORLD HISTORY OF THE DANCE. By Curt Sachs. Translated by Bessie Schoenberg. W. W. Norton and Company. $5.

THIS book is certainly one of the most important books that can be read about the dance in general, and in particular about the dances of primitive peoples and the emergent social dances of the Renaissance. It is called a "World History of the Dance," but it is something rather different from what its title indicates. Upon a solid base of colossal industry, erudition, and scientific organization the chief root types of the dance are set and analyzed in a frame which exemplifies the best German scholarship of recent date. Even if one did not know that Dr. Sachs was a distinguished musicologist, even if his book were unsigned, one must immediately mark the scope of its reference, its richness of analogy, the breadth of its correlations combined with almost Wagnerian overtones, elevating physical facts into the realm of mystical experience. Dr. Sachs is in the tradition of the Nietzschean dance lover, but Freud has also colored his categories. It would be impertinent, ungracious, and arrogant to question the value of this great work as a whole, but I should like to clarify several problems resident in Dr. Sachs's attitude which have bearing on dance in relation to theater. In this I am assuming that Dr. Sachs's opinions have cogency for anyone working with dance today, but most of us seriously occupied with dance must be so from a predominantly theatrical angle. Dancing is not done in our streets but in our theaters, and yet Dr. Sachs and many other dance enthusiasts, such as John Martin of the New York *Times,* have a profound resentment of dance in the theater, a resentment not always clearly stated but everywhere clearly felt. This anti-theatrical bias is, I feel, very dangerous for the general future of the dance.

Dr. Sachs feels that the dance is the first of the arts, living at once, unlike music, poetry, painting, and architecture, in time and space. And yet, just at the moment when the dance asserts itself on an equal and conscious footing with the other arts, Dr. Sachs leaves it, almost with resentment that it has quit its original communal function to become, what he himself first calls it, an *art.* He says, "Let us consider as dance all rhythmical motion not related to the work motif." He should further extend his restriction to dancing in theaters. He investigates "pure convulsive" dances, "weakened convulsive" dances, he relates the East African to the Cambodian, and in a philological paragraph analyzing the Hebrew verb *rakad* he asserts that King David *skipped* rather than danced before the ark. Fact after fact is examined, qualified, and presented in the first half of his book, "Dance Throughout the World."

In part two, "Dance Throughout the Ages," he traces the development of social dancing in the Western world, primarily in Europe, from the Protolithic period, through the lower Paleolithic, through the middle Paleolithic, down through the Protoneolithic to the later tribal cultures and Greece. His discussion of Renaissance social dances is no less detailed and no less interesting, but it is curious that he gives so much space to remote antiquity and comparatively little to more recent periods, which are as completely documented as they are completely unorganized for students. These later periods do not admit of theorizing or reconstruction and have the additional impact of their immediacy for us. In a special study this glaring gap might not be so noticeable, but in a "world history" it is hard to explain. It is not that Dr. Sachs does not know everything about maxixe, tango, charleston, shag, and big-apple. Only they do not for a variety of reasons deeply occupy him, since he considers them phenomena of a social degeneration from the primitive typus.

He divides his basic dancing types into introvert and extrovert, the one "incorporeal, transcendental," the other having "faith in his senses and in his sensual perceptions, in his strong limbs, and in the power to cause the metaphysical to become physical." As long as Dr. Sachs can occupy himself with dances of the Dinka, the Nauru, the Nilotic Nanda, or the Toba of the Gran Chaco he seems temperamentally approving. He believes in the value of an instinctive impulse which is so pure that it is almost subhuman. And even more complex forms, such as the passecaille, chaconne, sarabande, have the safely remote charm of a puzzling past. But when he comes to dancing that is to be seen and not done, when he attacks the spectacular as a degeneration of the purely communal forms, one is at a loss to follow him. He feels that the "ballet of the Orient is in the deepest sense true and inspired," since the religious tradition has kept its connection with dancing, and the natives (up to the European conquests) believed what they saw danced. Yet "the European ballet is no longer in the service of God and nature, but in that of ruling princes. Its beginning and end are cringing flattery, not god-fearing piety and devout prayer—and what goes between is empty play." Play, we grant you, but by no means empty play, unless much of princely commissioned music, poetry, architecture, sculpture, and painting is equally servile. Also dismiss all Italian mural painting,

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chamber music, and ecclesiastical architecture. The dialectic of Marx would have balanced the puritanical dogmatism of Freud in Dr. Sachs's categories. Dr. Sachs feels a sacred value in primary forms of social dancing as such, resenting its entrance into conscious art. The ballet left the royal court theaters before 1750 and has been a genuinely popular bourgeois spectacle ever since, rivaling drama and opera. It is so today. Louis the Sun King dancing only reminds Dr. Sachs of the ecstatic dances of the kings of Mexico and the Sudan. "The dancing Louis is feared by none but admired by all. He is not possessed by the god, for he is not dancing the God in whom he believes. The dance of the Sun King is the futility of egomania."

What use is there in facing this Savonarola of the dance with a protest that Louis was an artist in the direct line of the Renaissance humanist creators, whose ego was a belief in the divinity of themselves as human beings? The ballet has always been expressive of the glory of the human body released into actions which are symbols of the infinite possibilities which human beings by their own efforts may obtain. It has borrowed many decorative cloaks, as Dr. Sachs admits in one of his few late paragraphs, when he makes a half-hearted attempt at amend in speaking of the Russian ballet of Diaghilev. But these few words of praise do not compensate for the profound distaste he has of theater, a distaste which one feels is bred not of a prejudice but of a lack of familiarity. Abstract purity, or even the concrete intellectual purity of communal dance as such, has a far more distant, decorative, and romantic meaning to us than a discussion of what Noverre really meant in his reaction against the Paris Opéra. The Opéras are still with us, here in New York, in Philadelphia, Chicago, San Francisco. The stage is the place of the dance today as it was in Greece, as it was in Rome, and primitive peoples are still primitive. We need facts for the stage to help us be a better audience. Even if we are seated, we are participants. But no one can afford to omit Dr. Sachs's researches from his library, and our debt to him can never be repaid. LINCOLN KIRSTEIN

The Problem of Morals

THE CONCEPT OF MORALS. By W. T. Stace. The Macmillan Company. $2.25.

MR. STACE'S book is not the usual academic treatise on morality; it was written by a man who has sought to solve the problems of ethics in terms acceptable to his own age. For this reason, if for no other, it deserves the careful scrutiny of practical and worldly men.

For our author morality is a human device, relative to the needs that created it. Because the reviewer also calls himself a modern, and because he also believes that modernity involves the acceptance of a whole-hearted empirical attitude, he has no quarrel with the avowed temper of the book. His quarrel is based rather on Mr. Stace's failure to appreciate fully the implications of empiricism in ethics.

An empirical morality, we are told, must be grounded on three universal human traits—man's desire for happiness, his social nature, and his altruism. To the first of these traits one must object. For the term happiness is too widely used to retain any meaning. But the central objection refers to the author's arbitrary selection of these three traits from among a larger number, although morality is defined by him, and correctly from his empirical point of view, as "the proper and natural functioning of human personality." But if it is so defined, morality should include all universal human traits without exception and not only those which Mr. Stace happens to prefer. Otherwise morality is not the proper and natural functioning of human personality but its improper and most unnatural functioning. And the result is not an empirical and realistic morality but a "humanistic" one, in the Babbitt-More sense of the word; with this advantage however, that the "humanistic" conclusions have been arrived at without the silly and primitive pseudo-psychology of Babbitt and More.

If moral theory is to refer to the proper and natural functioning of the human personality, its fundamental problems must be redefined, for until now its problems have been those of either an authoritarian or a rationalistic morality, chiefly concerned with discovering the means of arriving at the correct judgment of right and wrong. The fundamental problem of an empirical morality, however, arises out of the need to satisfy the permanent and urgent impulses of men in society. This is, in other words, the problem of devising techniques of satisfaction, of discovering "moral equivalents" for all genuine human impulses, those which have been traditionally repressed no less than those which have been traditionally preferred and fostered. And this in turn may call for a thoroughgoing reconstruction of human institutions. It is indicative of Mr. Stace's half-hearted empiricism that he deals with ethics without making any reference whatever to politics and economics. Now an empirical ethics will still have to face some of the traditional problems, for instance, those arising out of the effort to define with adequate clarity the concepts of right and good. But an empirical ethics cannot consider these problems as purely theoretical, but must seek to solve them by direct and constant reference to the fundamental problems of practical adjustment.

When we shall have worked out a satisfactory theory along these lines, we shall have a morality that is truly empirical or scientific. But such a theory will have to wait until we actually begin to build a society which is capable of meeting the fundamental human demands of its members. And only when we shall have tested action and theory in terms of each other, as natural scientists do in their own fields, shall we be able to avoid the duplicity which today so deeply infects all our living—a duplicity arising from the possession of theories which are "noble" but irrelevant and practices which are "low" but inevitable.

These remarks do not imply a disparagement of Mr. Stace's book. Half-hearted in its empiricism though it is, it makes some very incisive remarks on the problem of morals for modern man. ELISEO VIVAS

Education Under the Führer

THE GERMAN UNIVERSITIES AND NATIONAL SOCIALISM. By Edward Yarnell Hartshorne, Jr. Harvard University Press. $2.

THIS book is written by an expert in German history who not only has used official legal documents and extensive unofficial text material unknown abroad (*vide* the three hundred items of the bibliography) but has also had wide personal experience: Dr. Hartshorne spent the year 1935-36 in Germany in order to compare the documents with reality.

He reports the introduction of the Führer principle into the universities, the destruction of the self-governing machinery of the faculties, non-intellectual criteria for selection

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of candidates, the introduction of military science, compulsory gymnastics, the prohibition of all and any scientific publication without the imprimatur of the politically appointed Führer-rector; and last but not least he describes the ironic situation of the students who struggled to establish National Socialism and who are now more strictly regimented than any other group.

Although his data do not favor his final conclusions, Dr. Hartshorne presents them fairly and enables us to make our own independent interpretation. In striking his balance he asks how these university "reforms" should be evaluated, and peculiarly enough, he answers that they are destructive to truth and science but favorable to Germany. He thus accepts the suppression of truth in the name of national advantage—which is the first unintentional step toward fascism.

Mr. Hartshorne is right in referring repeatedly to the so-called *Wehrhaftigkeit* which plays a decisive role as criterion in school and Gymnasium examinations. This word *Wehrhaftigkeit* is translated here (as in most books of this kind) as "defense-mindedness," whereas its actual meaning is "fighting spirit." The German word is thoroughly aggressive; the English translation awakens harmless associations. Entirely absurd is the translation of the German term *völkisch* as "eugenic." It must be admitted that a translation of this term offers more than technical difficulties. For *völkisch* has no descriptive function but is a political and ideological weapon unknown in American history. Let us hope that it will remain impossible to translate German history into American terms.

G. S. ANDERS

For William Tyndale

WILLIAM TYNDALE. By J. F. Mozley. The Macmillan Company. $4.

APPEARING as it does near to the four hundredth anniversary of Tyndale's martyrdom and within a few years of the same anniversary of the achievement of the ideal for which Tyndale lived and suffered death, this sturdy book is a clear reminder not only of Tyndale's courageously honest life and zealous endeavor but as well of the large debt all lovers of English prose owe to the father of the vernacular Bible. Without special pleading but with keen and thorough scholarship the author makes clear the extensive and direct borrowings indulged in by all subsequent translators and revisers of the Scriptures, particularly the New Testament. This dispassionate but positive analysis of the later and enduring fame and influence of Tyndale grows naturally out of a complete and thorough biographical and critical study in which traditional sources are carefully reexamined and several sound new conclusions are reached. Tyndale emerges from the pages of this book a strong personality and a thorough scholar, a priest in whom there was faith and through whom flowed good works, a fierce and selfless fighter for brave ideals.

Though marred by awkwardness of style, the book gives special satisfaction by its integrity. It is the work of a real scholar, who, because he is master of his field, is naturally just not only to his secondary figures like Sir Thomas More—who is less noble in relation to Tyndale than in some of the studies brought forth by his recent canonization—but also to Tyndale himself, who is not spared the revealment of his weaknesses by a light as bright as that which illumines his massive accomplishment and his saintly life.

DONALD A. ROBERTS

Outline of Western Economics

AN ECONOMIC HISTORY OF THE WESTERN WORLD. By Harry Elmer Barnes. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $5.50.

IT IS a very delicate task to apportion the amounts of praise and blame which I feel are the due of this compendious history of Western economic life. At this date it would be possible to stand on the shoulders of previous reviewers, if they had not seemed to suffer from a similarly delicate disorder.

From this it may be gathered that the disorder is at least in part generated by Mr. Barnes. Previous reviewers have found it possible to praise his well-known skill as a bibliographer and to admire the sweep of history which he has comprehended in one volume. They have mentioned in varying tones of praise his display of journalistic abilities. It is when they come to consider his point of view that they find themselves in trouble. To this trouble Mr. Barnes contributes by his preface. Here he explains:

> No preconceived notions or historical dogmas have guided its execution. The purely narrative and chronological approach has been supplemented by the more fundamental technique of institutional economics as expounded by Veblen, Sombart . . . and others of this school. A consistent effort has been made to let the dominant and cogent facts of material progress tell their own story, basing the organization and interpretation of the abundant materials upon the historical data themselves rather than upon any rigid or dogmatic philosophy of history.

It seems fair in the light of this quotation and other evidence to take Mr. Barnes to task by holding him up against the standards set by his acknowledged master, Thorstein Veblen. In an essay entitled Economics and Evolution which appeared in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics* in 1898 Veblen wrote, "From what has been said it appears that an evolutionary economics must be the theory of a process of cultural growth as determined by the economic interest, a theory of a cumulative sequence of economic institutions stated in terms of the process itself." Nowhere in this extensive new work does Mr. Barnes demonstrate that he has ever achieved a complete grasp of these principles laid down by Veblen. The "purely narrative and chronological approach" does not seem to have been "supplemented by the more fundamental technique of institutional economics as expounded by Veblen."

This is a highly useful book, especially for teachers of modern economic history. By devoting more than two-thirds of his space to the period since 1700 and more than 300 of the 750 pages to contemporary economic life beginning with what he calls the second industrial revolution, Mr. Barnes has provided us with a narrative of worldwide economic development for which any teacher of an elementary course should be grateful, if only because of the references to the outstanding works on the different sections of the subject. Mr. Barnes's particular brand of "liberalism" has insured that his work devotes much more space to many of these topics than does any similarly compendious recent work.

The shortcoming here under criticism is the invertebrate character of the book. Chronology and topicality seem to have dictated the material and its organization. Having no adequate understanding of what Veblen has called cumulative causation, Mr. Barnes is unable to state his theory of the sequence of economic institutions in terms of the process itself. The interrelationships of the various parts of his subject are for him purely mechanical. The reader who observes

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that, in conclusion, Mr. Barnes predicts that "the days of monopoly and finance capitalism are definitely numbered" may object that it is unfair to say that Mr. Barnes has no theory of cumulative causation. In reply it is impossible for me to say how Mr. Barnes arrived at these conclusions, but it is certain that he has not led his reader to arrive at them by any theory of cumulative sequence within this book.

The materials he presents are assertions, most of them out of the mouths of others; these are not usually well related one to another, and their value lies for the most part in their impetus to the reader to seek out the original and find what it was intending to say. It is to be hoped that the time will come when slightly less comprehensive histories of Western economic life will be written according to the formula set forth by Veblen. It is easy to predict that when they are written, Mr. Barnes will not write them.

Teachers of economic history will hope that they may go on having the benefit of Mr. Barnes's editorial hand, and the lay reader will stand prepared to read the next Barnes work as he has the last. The liberals will continue to be confused by Mr. Barnes's confusion, and the Soviets will forgive him much if he will devote the last thirty-five pages of each of his books to the experiment in Russia.

R. K. LAMB

Shorter Notices

YEAR'S END. By Josephine W. Johnson. Simon and Schuster. $2.

The hypersensitive personality so clearly revealed in Miss Johnson's novels finds in this book of poems perhaps a better medium for expression. These are not great poems, but they are interesting—largely because of their almost neurotic intensity. Relying not on the fine line, not on the extraordinary image, not, certainly, on music, but almost wholly on the uniqueness of her feeling about life and social injustice, Miss Johnson is an original if not a finished poet. The two poems entitled The Mortal Companion are almost first-rate. The larger number of poems here will be remembered because of the inner drama analyzed in them or because of the story told. Obviously Miss Johnson works intuitively and without much critical check; she is able to penetrate into the more subtle personal feelings but gives very little universalization. Nevertheless, one is impressed by the sincerity and the occasional power of these lyrics.

TOMORROW'S PHOENIX. By Ruth Lechlitner. Alcestis Press. $3.

The cause of left-wing poetry will not be appreciably advanced by this volume. It contains little evidence of the integration which social interests have brought to a number of writers in recent years. These pieces were obviously written out of intense conviction, but the author has not acquired the intellectual control or undergone the technical discipline which would enable her to achieve a poetic rendering of her faith. The combination of artiness of technique with artlessness of idea has become all too familiar, and it has proved a blind alley. The mode of statement here is mannered instead of forthright, the imagery is cloudy, and vigor of rhythm is sought through dispersion rather than by means of pattern and cumulation. With a few exceptions the poems give the impression of set pieces on assigned themes. They seek to corroborate an idea, not to create an experience. The exceptions, such as Recitation on Going Abroad and Noon: Southwest, suggest that Miss Lechlitner does best when she makes use of direct observation.

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THE ARTS

The Battle of the Roof

TO THE hysterical thirties was reserved the insanity which made a political isue out of the slope of a roof. The battle is still going on. Hitler, shortly after coming into power, proscribed flat ones. Time has modified even the German practice; but the emotion engendered by the question of the pitch of a roof illustrates how humankind still approaches its "technical" problems. Flat-roofers and pitched-roofers throughout the European world are still Guelfs and Ghibellines; the flat roof is rational and modern, the pitched roof traditional and mystical. Since the roof is by all odds the most important sheltering element of a house, perhaps noncombatants may be interested in a few notes on the background of the great roof battle.

Historically our interest centers neither on the cavemen and cellarmen, who had no great roof problems, nor on the Mediterranean peoples, whose equable climate permitted them flat roofs at an extremely early date, but on those of our ancestors who lived in the woods of northern Europe. Their earliest known form of dwelling was a sort of tent or tepee, which combined extreme structural simplicity with efficiency in shedding rain or snow. The great drawback was the cramping of space. If the cavemen may be said to have lived in cellars, the tent man lived exclusively in the attic. The sides of the tepee or charcoal-burner's hut, by sloping inward like rafters, permitted a man to stand full height only in the center, as the camper stands in his tent today.

An improvement over the tepee such as the Saxon "cruck" house is therefore to be rated as a great technical advance. A cruck was a straight tree trunk, cut off just above a straight diagonal branch. Two parallel rows of such trunks with their branches meeting at the center produced the equivalent of two vertical side walls surmounted by a gable. The trunks were the posts and the branches were the rafters. The roof was now up and out of the way. Under the attic, at last, there had been inserted a house! The inhabitant could walk upright through any part of his long hall. Spaciousness having been won through the upright wall, further improvements were mere matters of detail. A flat ceiling could be inserted under the rafters converting the attic into a storage loft; then the number of floors could be multiplied as the framing improved, and so on. Every subsequent step was a victory for the house proper at the expense of the attic, which had once been the whole thing. With later structural advances not even our warehouses any longer take the steep gabled form of the great warehouses of Nürnberg, since storage as well as living is easiest with vertical walls. Given the vertical wall as the boundary of the useful room, then attics are mere residue; and since a flat roof has the least area to frame and cover, the builder makes his roof as flat as he can. Under modern conditions, a steep pitched roof is aesthetically no longer shipshape; it expresses nothing of what goes on inside but on the contrary conveys the impression that someone is in there bumping his head against angles and dormers.

To say that a good builder makes his roof as flat as he can is not to say that it must always be a "flat roof." At the very moment when the followers of the rationalizing Le Corbusier were out to impose his flat roofs on America as a matter of

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Blocking Japan—

How China's Eighth Route Army is stopping Japan's advance in the Northern Provinces will be told in a startling article in an early issue of The Nation by T. A. Bisson, who has just returned from the scene of battle.

modern "discipline," their leader was experimenting with roofs that were composed of a series of low arches.

Like any element in a wisely designed house, the good roof reflects, in each instance, a different balance of forces. And these forces are psychological as well as technical. There is a sense in which, in the complexity of factors, the good architect *finds* the best house but cannot force it. Floods of water and curses punish the wilful transgressor. Unexpected blessings flow upon the imagination not bound by rules. Thus, in some recent California houses by R. M. Schindler a stupid site restriction calling for a sloping roof was transformed into a positive asset. The gradually rising ceiling of the large living rooms so opens the inside space toward the sky as to rouse a sense of exhilaration. A strictly rational flat ceiling could never give exactly the same pleasure.

To meddle in the balance that produces the best roof for a particular house is a privilege usurped only by dictators. The battle of flat against pitched roofs, in its extreme form, is a battle of antagonistic tastes frozen to dogma. The general tendency toward the low roof is the tendency of reasonableness, economy, the desire for free movement and openness, a readiness for new adventures; the extreme pitched roof is usually an expression of atavism, flourishing among the "dream houses" of the ignorant, desired by obfuscating dictators, welcome to those who love best to rummage in attics. And whenever M. Dali and his friends convince their followers that their homes should provide an escape to something nearly approximating the mother's womb, we shall look upon still another set of roof forms, which only the psychiatrists will be able to explain.

DOUGLAS HASKELL

DRAMA

Elizabethan Frolic

ONE of Orson Welles's many gifts is apparently the gift for discovering "social significance" in places where most contemporary directors have neglected to look. I very much doubt that all that he and his critics seemed to find in "Julius Caesar" was really there, or at least that Shakespeare himself intended anything of the sort; but the case of Thomas Dekker's "The Shoemaker's Holiday" (Mercury Theater) is different. It is both the rollicking farce which Mr. Welles's company has made of it and also a genuine social document. To have brought it back to such vigorous and amusing life is a real achievement.

I, to be sure, should have preferred to see a little less "gagging" of the play itself. The permanent set—bare platform, three curtained recesses, and a sketchy background of high-gabled houses—is excellent, but there are moments when we are asked to laugh at rather than with the play, and I should have preferred to have omitted those moments of satiric emphasis on the conventions of stagecraft when the thing is treated rather after the manner of "Princess Turandot" or "The Yellow Jacket." Nevertheless, there can be nothing but praise for the lusty playing of the low-comedy parts and for the general air of brisk good fun which makes the short performance pass very swiftly and gives the audience as good a time as it is likely to have anywhere in the theater. All of Dekker's hearty bawdiness is there, but so too is the full flavor of his romantic, middle-class optimism.

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As historians of the drama have long been in the habit of noting, the play is somewhat unusual for its time. Not only Shakespeare himself but most of his contemporaries as well preferred to soar. Whatever their own origins might have been, their sympathies and their imaginations were chivalric. They preferred to write about kings and princes, and if the simple citizen appeared he was more than likely to be treated with derision. Even Shakespeare's bumpkins, though doubtless in many instances drawn from his memory of the people of Stratford, and though treated with his all-embracing sympathy, are looked down upon from a tremendous height with the delighted amusement of a man perfectly aware that he is living in a different world. There is no class loyalty or class solidarity, intellectual or emotional, for Shakespeare does not feel himself any longer a member of that class. But Dekker, perhaps out of the simplicity of his heart, writes about his middle-class people with what seems to be a complete accord with their ideas and ideals.

The play is said to have been first performed before Queen Elizabeth, but it might with greater propriety have been performed before an audience of apprentices, who are pictured exactly as they liked to picture themselves. They are gallant lads, self-reliant and proud of their craft. Some day they may be masters themselves, with the prospect beyond that of becoming, like their master in the play, a lord mayor who can talk as man to man even with a king. At the same time there is a distinctive middle-class romanticism, with its pleasant belief in the substantial virtues as well as its firm conviction that love conquers all.

To those more keenly on the alert to make distinctions in such matters I leave the question whether the class consciousness of Dekker is of an authentic and commendable sort or whether he was only an escapist helping to delude his fellows with romance and unconsciously conspiring with their oppressors to keep them foolishly contented with an Elizabethan version of the hope that any boy may be President some day. What does concern me is the fact that the spirit is a very clearly defined one and that the production—incidentally it replaces "Julius Caesar" only on certain nights—conveys it to a remarkable degree.

J. B. Priestley never seems to be entirely at home in writing for the stage, and that is doubtless one reason why "Time and the Conways," now being acted at the Ritz Theater by an English cast with Dame Sybil Thorndike at its head, is structurally so cumbersome and unsatisfactory. Ostensibly the central theme is some rather Proustian conception that the true significance of any group of lives cannot be grasped by looking at any temporal cross-section of it but only by considering the pattern formed when successive relationships are contemplated as existing simultaneously in eternity. What one actually gets is one fine act, the second, which presents a grimly absorbing study of the hates and frustrations of a family group, and two other rather pointlessly meandering scenes which fail to be either interesting in themselves or to establish any special relevance of the Proustian moral, delivered in the form of a set speech, to the story here told. The second act is written and acted with real power, but the effect is more or less spoiled by the anti-climax of the last. As for the first, Mr. Priestley himself is said to be aware of some of its defects, though I doubt whether he knows that Americans can be as acutely annoyed by this sort of distressingly British coyness as the British themselves are at some American peculiarities. A jolly family doing charades is simply not our idea of an exhilarating spectacle.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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FILMS

A Wide Western

"WELLS FARGO" (Paramount) is one of those modern Westerns which demand of the producer as much research as poetry. The time is gone when such a film could do with simple and familiar properties: a patch of desert, a saloon (exterior and interior), a dozen cowboys, and several guns ready at a moment's notice to be drawn for soft-eyed Sally's sake. Now we must have a sense of history, perhaps a million square miles of background, and several hundred persons faultlessly attired in the coonskins and the silk hats of their day; everything must be authentic, and there must be a lot of it to accompany the tune played by time as it marches past milestone after milestone of subtitled dates. The danger, of course, is that we shall get from all this a narrative educated beyond its intelligence—heavy with misplaced learning, bloated like one of its own hoop skirts. The danger is seldom avoided, nor has "Wells Fargo" completely avoided it; the film is a little too long, and too many of its people are conscious of the history they are helping to make. But it is the best of its kind to date.

It begins at Buffalo in 1840 with Ramsay MacKay (Joel McCrea) arriving on an authentically primitive train from New York with the first oysters ever to get so far inland. He is bringing them to his employer, Mr. Wells, who within perhaps ten minutes of film time has extended his influence to St. Louis and within another half-hour is a force in San Francisco. The two thousand miles beyond St. Louis are filled in a little later by the pony express, an Indian raid on a stagecoach, and still later by Confederate attempts during Civil War time to capture cargoes of bullion coming overland to Washington—a glimpse of which we are not denied, with Lincoln talking to his Cabinet and Joel McCrea waiting to assure the President that the next cargo will arrive. The gold rush has its place, as have vigilantism and the Mexican War, not to speak of a romance between Mr. McCrea and Frances Dee which runs from first to last and involves perhaps six meetings after long separations. There is more still if I could remember it, and I have doubtless given the impression that there is too much. This is not, however, the case. Frank Lloyd, the director, has set his mass of material in continuous and significant motion; when he should be brief he is—brilliantly so—and when he should pause somewhere he does, and takes his time. He has had, indeed, a perfect sense of time; not as a historian perhaps, but certainly as an artist creating and cutting a film. Few pictures have been more steadily and naturally exciting.

The steadiness and the naturalness come in large part from the presence in almost every scene of one Hank York, an uncouth, heroic humorist played to perfection by Bob Burns. His slow, loud speech, his friendly common sense, his genius for understatement, his absolute courage, and his rather wild eyes which never look straight at the camera because they are rolling in contemplation of the next wise thing their owner is going to say—these do not quite tell all the story, but they are enough to suggest Hank's value as a natural. Without him the film would have been a mere whirl and a mess, a Wells Farrago. With him in it to slow it down and keep it human it is both rich and ordered. MARK VAN DOREN

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Letters to the Editors

A Meat Packer Explains

Dear Sirs: In the article Why You Pay More for Food in your issue of December 4, Ruth Brindze stated that the difference between the price to the farmer and the retail price of beef was greater in October, 1937, than in October, 1936. She added, "The inference is inescapable that the increased margin is increased profit."

As a matter of fact, the average profits of the meat packing industry are at no time large enough to affect noticeably the prices of meat in the quantities purchased by the typical consumer. Government figures show that about 600 meat packers doing business last year, including large companies, earned only about one cent per dollar of sales, which is only a fraction of a cent per pound of meat sold. During the past ten years the average profit rate of all meat-packing companies conducting slaughtering operations has been less than 4 per cent on net worth—comparable with normal bond interest—and less than one cent per dollar of sales (according to reports filed annually with the Packers and Stockyards Administration by meat packers conducting slaughtering operations). Only a few companies have indicated in published reports their earnings for the current year, but those which have done so have reported profits generally lower than those in 1936. One large company reported a substantial loss for its operations during 1937.

The writer's figures concerning margins also were erroneous. According to figures of the United States Department of Agriculture, the margin in October, 1937, between the price of good steers in Chicago and the retail values in New York of cuts or products obtained from 100 pounds of live animal was 3.47 cents per pound. In October, 1936, the margin was greater—3.87 cents per pound. The wholesale value of the beef obtained from 100 pounds of steer of good grade increased only $3.52 from October, 1936, to October, 1937, whereas the price of 100 pounds of live steers yielding meat of that grade increased $4.44 during the same period. In other words, the increase in the value of dressed beef was less than the increase in the value of the live animal. These figures are typical of most other grades of beef.

Meat products are perishable and must be sold promptly for the going market price. Price-fixing would be economically unsound and impracticable. The prices at which meat packers sell their products to retailers are determined not by the desire of meat packers but by the amount which consumers are able and willing to pay for the available supply of meat.

WESLEY HARDENBERGH
Institute of American Meat Packers
Chicago, December 21

Dear Sirs: My statement on the spread between the farm and retail price of beef was based on data in "Price Spreads Between the Farmer and the Consumer" issued by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the Department of Agriculture. According to this report, which runs as far back as 1913, the "actual margin" in October, 1936, on 2.16 pounds of beef cattle on the farm and its equivalent of one pound of beef in the retail market was 16 cents. In October, 1937, this margin had increased to 19.6 cents, which according to the government's statistics was one of the all-time highs. In indicating the spread between farm and consumer prices, these figures, which are averages for the country, are more germane than the cost of meat at Chicago and the value in New York.

I am entirely familiar with the figures quoted in Mr. Hardenbergh's letter. The 1 per cent profit on net sales was widely publicized in New York during the meat strike. But corporate finance is far too intricate to accept such figures on their face. We must know more about items written off as losses, about depreciation reserves, profits from by-products, profits of subsidiary corporations, officers' salaries, and similar matters. In the Federal Trade Commission's report on the milk distributors, the difference between the profits reported and those estimated by the commission's staff indicates that business men sometimes do not know just how well they are doing.

RUTH BRINDZE
New York, January 3

"Tae Help Spanish Bairns"

Dear Sirs: You've probably heard of the fine thing the British cooperatives are doing in the matter of milk for Spain, but I thought you might be interested to learn of the "sixpenny tokens" that are on sale in every co-op branch. The response has been magnificent—they've collected well over two thousand pounds in the two or three weeks since the tokens went on sale. It's touching to hear some of these Scottish village women, many of them pretty hard up themselves, asking for a token. "It's a saxpence well spent," they say, "tae help thon puir Spanish bairns." Don't judge all the British by what their government is or isn't doing. There's a live and growing opposition to that government, particularly up here in Scotland, and among the working people.

I also want to tell you how tremendously *The Nation* is appreciated here. When we've read our copy it passes from hand to hand through a dozen little stone cottages in this village, and from there to the workers in the local paper mill, and always read from cover to cover until, I suppose, it disintegrates from sheer use.

CHRISTINE H. STURGEON
Currie, Midlothian, Scotland,
December 7

Addendum from Mr. Thomas

Dear Sirs: Will you be good enough to give me a little space to answer a question which has been raised concerning my recent article on America's peace policy in your pages. The question is: why did I not discuss in that article the Ludlow amendment, and what is my opinion of that amendment? I did not discuss the matter originally because the article was written to deal with the subject of collective security, and after I had seen the proof of Mr. Buell's article, there was no space to deal with the Ludlow-La Follette proposal.

Briefly my position in regard to a referendum before a declaration of war, except in case of invasion, is what I have frequently declared it to be in the past fifteen or twenty years. The amendment is no implement for peace. A 51 per cent vote would not of itself make a particular war right when a 49 per cent vote would make it wrong. No popular vote on the declaration of war could keep us out of war if a President's whole policy had been set toward war. Such a President might even along modern lines put us in war without declaring it. Nevertheless, I favor the amendment,

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partly because of its probable effect on Presidential policy. To believe in democracy and the right of the people to pass on, let us say, a bond issue but to refuse them a right to pass on the desperate issue of peace or war is to my mind insincere to the verge of hypocrisy.

There are no practical difficulties in modern times about taking a rapid referendum, and the populace in modern times is probably less likely to be stampeded into a foreign war than Congress. Most arguments against the amendment assume that despite the Kellogg Pact war must still remain an instrument of national policy and the threat of it a necessary element in our diplomacy. It is precisely this that I do not believe. The fact that a referendum in America was necessary to a declaration of war except in case of attack would somewhat tend to strengthen that popular opposition to war throughout the world which has been our main defense against a new cataclysm. It would not weaken the United States except on the theory that the strength of the United States depends upon the ability of an Administration to put a nation into war regardless of the opinion of the people who must fight. NORMAN THOMAS

New York, January 6

Why Balance the Budget?

Dear Sirs: You appeared to concede in your leading paragraph on December 11 that the time has come for the federal government to balance its budget. I realize that this is a belief which is held with a great deal of conviction by many people of all political shades. To me, however, it seems to be a dangerous superstition which should be attacked and exposed at every opportunity.

Just what is it that we have to fear from a continued unbalanced budget? Inflation? All that inflation means is a larger volume of spending, and that is, by common consent, precisely what is most needed at the present time. If the increased spending goes so far as to draw into productive use the bulk of present unemployed resources and hence to threaten a sharp rise in prices, the time will surely have come to call a halt, that is, to balance the budget. But how is it possible to take the inflation bogy seriously when everyone is racking his brains to think up ways to induce an inflation through the more usual private agencies?

Or perhaps it is the "burden" of paying interest on the increased debt which ought to frighten us? The simplest way of solving this difficulty would be to have the government create the additional money directly instead of going through the ritual of having the banks create it (out of thin air in either case) and allowing them to tax the government for turning it over. But this solution, it may be conceded, runs too directly counter to received fiscal thinking to be practical. Let us admit that interest must be paid. The fact still remains that interest paid in this way is no "burden" but only a transfer from some of the rich to others of the rich, and if the social-security program continues unchanged, it will in time become in part a transfer from some of the rich to the aged poor.

On the surface it would appear that there is more substance to the fears entertained by some that a continuation of deficit financing will have a disastrous effect on the market for government bonds and hence on the government's credit. Stripped of phraseology, this means simply that there is a danger that the big bankers and their followers will refuse to buy government bonds; and indeed it is reliably rumored that they have already intimated to the Administration that this is their intention. In other words, they are saying to the Treasury, "Balance the budget, or else . . ." The example of France is sufficiently fresh to remind us that this may be no idle threat. And yet it can be successfully defied by courageous and resolute action. If the interests refuse to go along with a policy of deficit financing, the Administration has only to use the Federal Reserve system and its tremendous resources to checkmate this blackmail threat once and for all.

The problem facing the progressive movement at the present time, and perhaps for some time to come, is to make capitalism work in spite of the opposition of the capitalists. This can only be done if the purse-strings are taken out of the hands of Wall Street bankers and turned over to those who will know how to loosen them when the situation demands an expansion of spending. The best defense which the reactionaries have against such a development is the popular superstition about "economy" and a balanced budget. It seems to me that *The Nation* is doing no service to the progressive cause by lending its authority to this ideological bulwark of reaction. PAUL M. SWEEZY

Cambridge, Mass., December 23

[It should be noted that *The Nation* has never advocated balancing the budget by economies, as the reactionaries have urged, but by increased taxes on the wealthy. Granting that much of the hysteria over the unbalanced budget is politically inspired, we submit that a pay-as-you-go program based on social taxation is open to fewer dangers than an attempt to beguile the cooperation of wealth through deficits. Mr. Sweezy himself has indicated one of the gravest defects in his plan—the fact that it permits reactionaries to sabotage necessary social expenditures by uttering the old but highly effective shibboleth that a government, as well as an individual, must live within its income. This may be untrue, but we defy anyone to demonstrate the fallacy to the average citizen.—EDITORS THE NATION.]

CONTRIBUTORS

LUCILLE B. MILNER, secretary of the American Civil Liberties Union, spent last summer making a special study of fascist propaganda and activities in London and Paris.

GEORGE BUTLER is a Methodist minister in New Haven. He is the delegate of the National Religion and Labor Foundation to the Central Labor Council of New Haven.

LEONARD CARLTON is a New York newspaperman.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN, formerly the daily book reviewer of the New York *Times,* is now on the staff of *Fortune* magazine.

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN, the author of "Dance," is the director of the Ballet Caravan.

ELISEO VIVAS is a member of the Department of Philosophy of the University of Wisconsin and a frequent reviewer of works of philosophy for *The Nation.*

DONALD A. ROBERTS is a member of the Department of English of the College of the City of New York.

R. K. LAMB teaches economic history at Williams College.

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THE NATION, 20 Vesey St., New York. Price, 15 cents a copy. By subscription—Domestic: One year $5; Two years $8; Three years $11. Additional Postage per year: Foreign, $1; Canadian, 50 cents. The Nation is indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, Dramatic Index, Index to Labor Periodicals, Public Affairs Information Service. Three weeks' notice and the old address as well as the new are required for change of address.

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